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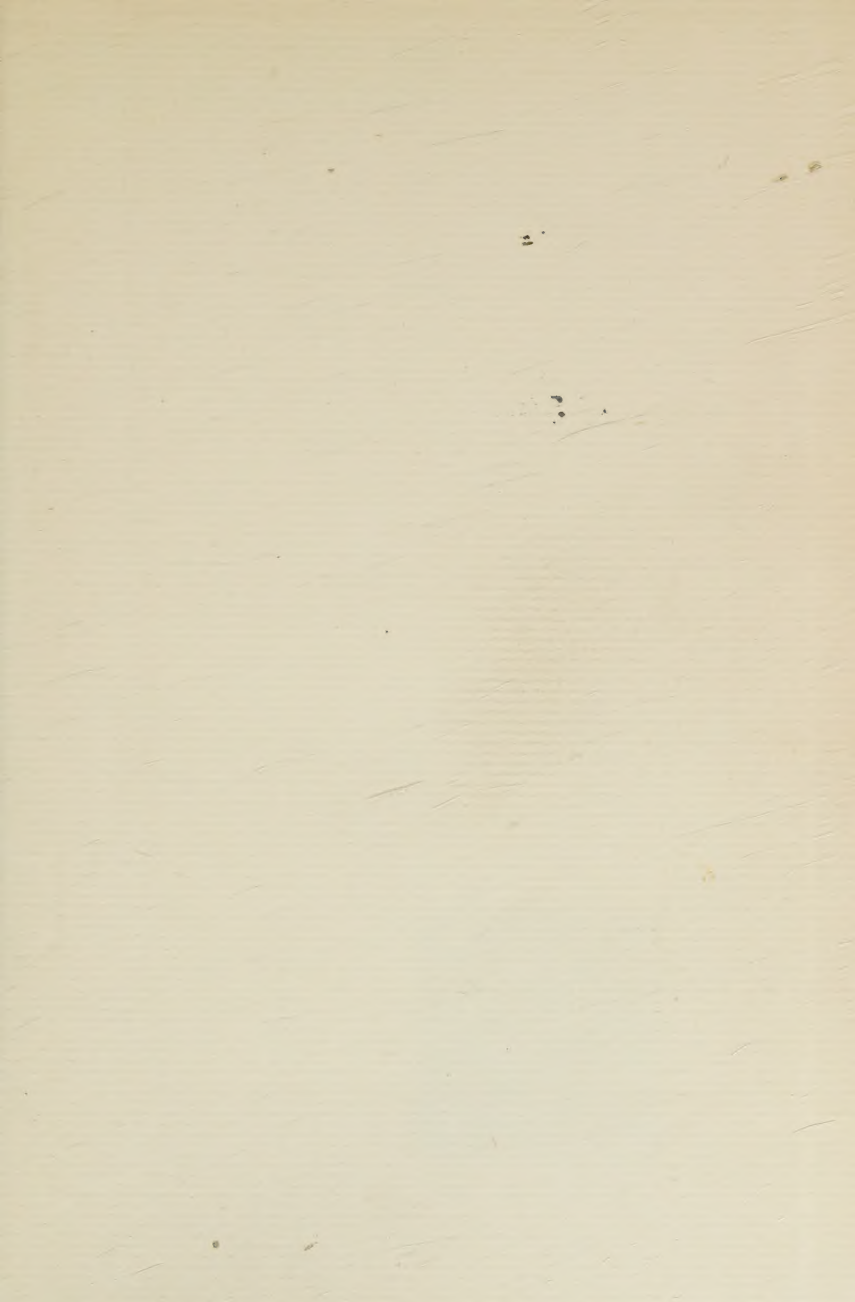
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CHRISTIANITY AND THE
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CHRISTIANITY AND THE PRESENT MORAL UNREST

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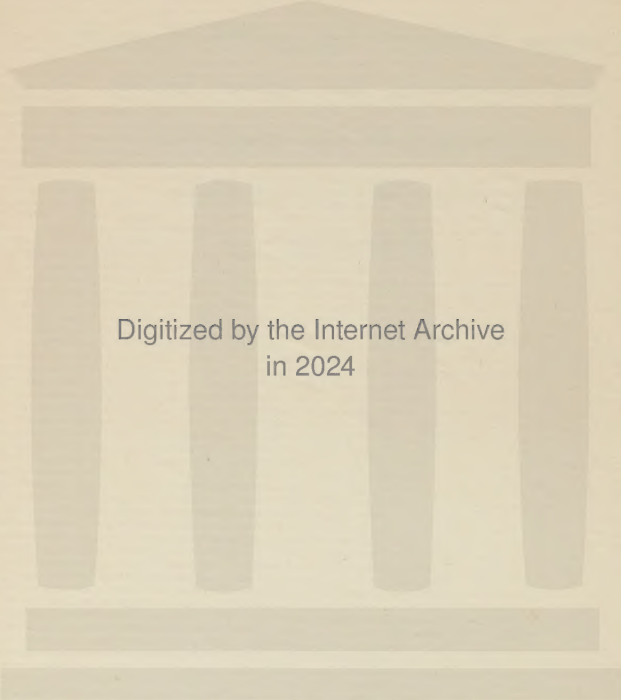
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TO

LUCY GARDNER

AT WHOSE SUGGESTION THIS VOLUME OF ESSAYS
WAS UNDERTAKEN, AND WITHOUT WHOSE
ENCOURAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE
IT WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN
COMPLETED



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PREFACE

A. D. LINDSAY, M.A., LL.D.,
Master of Balliol

THIS book is not an official publication of the Conference on Politics, Economics and Christianity, but it is a direct outcome of Copec. That Conference, the meetings which preceded it and the meetings which have followed it, revealed how perplexed many who are most in earnest in attempting to apply Christianity to the problems of our modern life, are with the complexity and many-sidedness of these problems, and perhaps especially how quickly they seem to be brought up against the apparent necessity and the unsatisfactoriness of compromise. It seems a far cry from the social life of Palestine nineteen hundred years ago to a modern industrialized and international society, and that distance makes the advice to "do as Jesus would" disappointingly unhelpful if taken literally. The writers of this book are at one in being convinced that the message of Jesus Christ has a universal significance which makes it independent of the particular social conditions of that far-off simple time: that it has fruitfulness and illumination for our time as much as for any other. They are also in their different ways conscious of the complication and diversity of modern problems, and they have tried to set out from different points of view and with different problems in mind how the Christian message can illumine our present difficulties.

If anyone comes to this book hoping to find in it a definite answer, whether authoritative or otherwise, to specific problems he will be disappointed. But it is essential to our position that such an attitude ought to lead to disappointment. It is not that we think ourselves unfit to write a new Decalogue (that goes without saying), but that a new Decalogue is not what we think is wanted. What is essential is that we should each of us, by mutual help and by the recognition of spiritual communion, fill ourselves with the Spirit of Christ and learn for ourselves to understand its universal significance and then each in our own special position and with our own special knowledge work out its application for ourselves.

The reasons for this attitude are several. One, and perhaps the chief, is that, as is pointed out in Chapter V, Christianity is not a religion of legal observance but of moral freedom. Another reason which is especially important at the present time is that the right answer to many of our present-day problems needs great technical knowledge as well as moral insight. When men complain that Christianity takes no clear line on many of our most pressing social questions, that it does not say, for example, whether we ought to be socialists or individualists, they forget that all such political questions are partly questions, not of what relations ought to subsist among men, but how far certain specific legislation will help to bring such relations about. Men may whole-heartedly agree in the ideals for which they are striving and honestly differ as to the means which will bring those ideals nearer. Our social problems, because they have, many of them, been produced by want of organization rather than by wickedness, cannot be cured without organization. We can be sure of the spirit which should animate

the organization, but to decide on the best method and machinery of organization is largely a technical question.

Lastly, it is our deepest conviction that the principles and message of Christianity are only to be understood in a common life of mutual service, that it is only in the experience of active fellowship that men can learn the Will of God. It is no good being so much occupied with organization and machinery that we forget the simple human purposes, the real common life for the strengthening and support of which alone the machinery is needed. If we are to be a Christian community, we shall have to learn a technique which will help us to make our great and far-reaching modern organizations serve the purposes of the spirit, but we shall never begin to do that unless we first learn the lesson which only experience of the smaller human fellowships can teach.

The chapter on the family could have been supplemented by chapters on neighbourhood, the school, the club, on the various ways of living together and coming to a common mind which we have at our disposal.

The contributors to this book can at least testify for themselves how much insight and common understanding comes from co-operation and conference. They did not attempt to get a book written for the details of which all should take responsibility. They found that conference did not eliminate their difficulties, but did help them to come to a mutual understanding which seemed all the more worth while because of their difference in experience and outlook and emphasis. This book will fulfil the purpose its writers had in mind if it will help other people to reach beyond the differences of outlook and experience that on the surface

of things seem only to divide and to come by work and study in common to the grasping of an underlying common hope and purpose. For in a willing submissiveness to this we shall find freedom from the disabilities of partiality and prejudice and a power—all the greater for our diversities—to help and enrich the common life.

We cannot close this Preface without expressing the indebtedness we all feel to the leadership of Professor Muirhead, who acted as Chairman of the Group throughout its sittings.

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CHRISTIANITY AND THE PRESENT MORAL UNREST

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

J. H. MUIRHEAD, LL.D.

I.—FACTORS IN THE MORAL UNREST

It was a commonplace of nineteenth-century reflection that we lived in a period of transition. The facts are too well known to require more than mention. In invention, in industry, in politics, in religion and theology, things were in a state of flux. Yet there was one field in which there was still at any rate the appearance of comparative stability. Morality, as more deeply rooted than perhaps any of these others, is apt to be the last rallying point of conservatism and to have a power of holding out when everything else is undergoing change. It was indeed no longer possible, as in the only previous period in modern history comparable with that time, to draw a line as Descartes did round his "Code of Morals" and place it "in reserve along with the truths of faith" or to hold with Locke that "the Gospel contains so perfect a Body of Ethics that Reason may be excused from that Inquiry since she may find man's Duty clearer in Revelation than in herself." But the leaders of nineteenth-century thought

—Carlyle, Ruskin and George Eliot, even John Stuart Mill and Huxley, not to speak of Tennyson and Browning, with all their heresies—may still be said to have held fast to the great Christian tradition in ethics, and to have conceived of their work as a purification rather than as a rejection of it in its then existing form. In the younger generation there was indeed lots of emancipated talk in morals as elsewhere. It seemed to feel that it ought to be in a transition in this also. But its own earlier training had been in the orthodoxies of the old, and except here and there, where emancipation only succeeded in making itself ridiculous or worse, it ended in little more than talk.

To-day there is a change. It is no longer possible to shut off any field of life in deference to the authority or supposed sufficiency of Christian ethics. If not prepared with Socrates boldly to declare that “the uncriticized life is no life at all”, we have to reconcile ourselves as best we may to seeing every authority and every accepted maxim challenged to show its credentials. That this in the end must be for the good of life itself and that the pains it brings with it are growing pains we cannot doubt. Yet in the meantime there is sufficient reason for profound disquiet among those who are in any way responsible for the moral guidance of the coming generation, (*a*) in the spread of the emancipation of thought and action, that in the last generation was confined to small groups, to whole sections of society,¹ and (*b*) in the real difficulty of any satisfactory adjustment of old and new standards.

If, turning from the fact of this change, we ask what

¹ It was said of revolutionary Russia, “one generation talked, the next acted.” Something of the same kind might be said of the relation between the Victorian and the present age. What was crude speculation in the one has become no less crude experimentation in the other.

are to be named as the chief causes of it, most people would fix at once on the Great War as the most outstanding of them, and this of course has had its share. The ruthless realism with which the younger generation of men and women alike were suddenly brought up against basal elements in human nature, and the emancipation from the restraints of the older social order, which the hastily devised war organization brought with it, were obvious factors. East of Boulogne it seemed as if there were not any more ten Commandments. Going along with this and of wider application, there was the new outlook on life, and the new standards of living, which the war opened up to whole classes and nations of men. But the war was only one of the forces at work, and it may be doubted whether it was the deepest-going. Already before the war science was taking new directions and opening up new fields of exploration, for which the war only offered new opportunities. The realism of the war had its counterpart in the realism of the new Psychology. That this, like all scientific knowledge, is fraught with matter of vital importance for the guidance of life is not for a moment to be doubted. But besides the ripe there is also an "unripe fruit of wisdom," and in two main directions the new psychology has contributed to deepen the moral unrest of which I am speaking. By an emphasis, now coming to be generally recognized as altogether exaggerated, on the cruder instincts of the human soul, it has succeeded in giving a wholly false impression of their place, if not also of their essential uncontrollableness, in the conduct of life. In the second place, owing to the naturalistic bent of some of its leading exponents, Psycho-analysis has seemed to offer an account of the moral and religious consciousness that does not so much explain them as explain them

away. If religion is a survival of the parental, and morality of the social complex, and if parenthood and citizenship are themselves merely incidents of individual development, what permanence can be assigned to them in human life? The result of all this has been that just at a time when, owing to the sudden gift of a new liberty, the conviction of the spiritual issues at stake in the right use of it is the one thing needful, this conviction has been in many loosened, if it has not been altogether undermined.

But it would be a mistake to conceive of moral unrest as the result simply of a revolt of the present generation against the restraints of the older ethics. On the positive side we have to reckon with a new sensitiveness to moral obligations, to which again science no less than the war has had its share in contributing. I have already spoken of the enlargement of men's view of their social relations of which the war was the occasion. If William Godwin were writing to-day of "Political Justice" he would have to take account of an immensely wider field than the life of a single Society. Side by side with national ethics we have been made acutely aware that there exists a universal ethic with claims upon the conscience of an entirely different order. Similarly the new biology with its application to the art of Eugenics has had a widening effect in bringing home to the present generation the conception of a duty to the race, the social import of which it is impossible to exaggerate. If, as we are taught, each individual is the bearer of biophores that mean either health and happiness or disease and misery to a succeeding generation, marriage comes to be invested with a wholly new significance and raises problems for individuals and societies for the solution of which older moral traditions offer little or no guidance.

But going deeper perhaps than any of these more superficial causes of conflict and unrest there is a division within the mind itself which is more and more making itself felt as a source of profound, if often subconscious, disquiet.

In some of the conflicts already mentioned we have an opposition between what is right and what, on a little sincere reflection, may be seen to be plainly wrong. In others we have one between a narrower and a wider world where again it is fairly plain on reflection to which our allegiance is due. But it is not these conflicts that are the sources of the deepest unrest. It is when right meets right on apparently equal terms that we have the "fell incensed points of mighty opposites" which form the real tragedies of life. It is such an opposition of at least apparent rights that we have in the conflict between the freest use of the intelligence in the search for truth—the duty of proving all things by the test of their harmony with reason and experience—and the loyalty to forms of belief that seem bound up with the very existence of the moral order as something deriving its claim upon us from its consonance with a Will above our own. We hear indeed less to-day of the conflict between science and religion than we did half a century ago. But this is not because science has bated one jot of its claim to bring ethical and religious doctrine to the test of reason. It is rather because on the one hand theology has retired from obviously untenable positions to concentrate on fundamental points, on which the physical sciences have little or nothing to say, and on the other hand because to a large extent the great mass of the population has ceased to take an interest in specific doctrines or even specific forms of religion. The source of this indifference is one of the most puzzling phenomena of our time. In the absence

of other explanations I would hazard the conjecture in harmony with all that the new psychology teaches, that it is a case of suppression, and that it is the result of the still subconscious sense of an unresolved conflict between the claims of the intelligence and the claims of feeling. In a remarkable passage devoted to the sketch of the phases through which the human spirit has passed, and must still recurrently pass in its pilgrimage, a great German philosopher has analysed what he calls the "Unhappy Consciousness." The phrase itself is not, perhaps, a very happy one, but it points to the truth that at certain periods of the world's history, the spirit of man suffers a species of inner disintegration—is "internally shattered," and as a result finds itself both in work and in enjoyment in a state of profound dissatisfaction with itself and its world. Hegel was here thinking more particularly of the period just before the advent of Christianity: but the tale was true of himself and of the epoch for which he was speaking and has yearly become a truer one since he wrote. What we are witnessing in the modern world is the break up of the harmony of inner and outer, which by a kind of miracle was achieved for a short period in the Middle Ages. A more recent writer¹ has subtly characterized this as the result of the reference of art, science and religion to separate worlds, which since the Renaissance have been more and more losing touch with one another. What is true of each of these fields collectively holds true also of each of them separately, and the point at which this inner division comes home to everyone in the ordinary business of life is the separation of conduct from religion, of ethics from divinity or the doctrine of God. It is the profound conviction of the writers in this volume that there can be no healing

¹ Mr. Collingwood, in *Prologue of Speculum Mentis* (Oxford, 1924).

of the wounds of the spirit until a point of view can be reached from which its life can again be seen as an indivisible whole and a sense of its essential unity recovered.

The present volume, needless to say, makes no claim to be regarded as offering even the barest sketch of a "Philosophy of the Spirit." The question to which the writers seek an answer is the more modest one of the relation of the ethical ideas represented by Christianity taken in its widest sense to the moral problems which our time is forcing upon us. Can it still be maintained that these contain the clue to the solution of the more pressing of them? We believe that it can, but it all depends on the interpretation that is given to these ethical ideas, and in the ensuing section I have attempted, with the general concurrence of the other contributors, to give a short outline of what in our view that interpretation should be. If, in the attempt to reach the central ethical truth contained in Christianity, we touch something which may also be claimed as the central truth of other great religious systems like those of Judaism and Buddhism, this will only be an additional proof of one of our fundamental contentions, namely that we are dealing with no mystical, esoteric doctrine but with a secret foreordained for discovery by all those who seek for it in sincerity and truth, and that, in helping others besides the adherents of the Christian faith to understand the true meaning of their own, we may be building better than we know.

II.—FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS IN CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Difficult though it may be to find the right way of approach to our task, it is not difficult to take warning against ways that are certainly wrong and may be

trusted to lead nowhere. In one of the most suggestive passages of his *Suggestions in Ethics* Bosanquet pillories "the idea that a better life for modern peoples than that existing to-day could be evolved directly from a few unharmonized texts of Scripture belonging to an age when no such life was possible." Inspired sayings are perhaps the most precious part of man's spiritual heritage and the very breath of the spirit's life. Condensing great ranges of experience and struck off in moments of deep emotion with its accompanying insight, they are the Sibylline leaves of the soul's destiny. But, like these leaves, they are scattered fragments. Each has its context in the occasion and in the time to which it belongs. Collect them as you may from the most inspired sources, you will find no complete and consistent guidance in them for life as it lies before you here and now. It is not only that whole sides of that life find no place in them, but sides that find a place have been so altered by the new environment as to make the text wholly inapplicable to them.

A second path that can lead nowhere but to error is to take Christianity itself and as a whole out of its context in the great process of reflection and experimentation by which man is for ever seeking to know and to find himself in a strange perplexing world, and to conceive of it as something entirely new and unrelated to what went before in the world outside Judaism. If we would read its meaning aright we must take Christianity as a page in the great Missal of man's thought about himself. If it came, as is rightly claimed for it, in the fullness of time, it is because it came as the fuller expression of something for which the reason and conscience of men were searching, with which the whole creation was travailing *together* in pain till then. There was indeed something new and entirely vital in

what it brought, but it would be a strange and disquieting thought if it could be shown that this was something quite unexampled in man's experience and quite unanticipated in his effort to interpret that experience to himself. That it should appear at the first to involve a break both with the social organization and the established philosophies of the time was only natural. But the affinity that such great writers as the author of the Fourth Gospel found with the thought of Plato, St. Paul with Zeno and the Stoics, and the place which Christianity was able to find for itself in the system of Roman Law (and it may be added, which Roman Law was able to find for it) are sufficient to show that the same principle of organizing intelligence was at work in it as was at work in them. If the Galilean conquered the Athenian and the Cyprian, it was because his teaching was something more inclusive, therefore more rational and more soul-satisfying than theirs. If its sweetness rather than its reasonableness was what captured the hearts of men at the first, it is by its reasonableness that it has had and still has to capture their minds.

What Græco-Roman civilization and the Ethics that was man's reflection upon it achieved is familiar to the student of history and need not be more than touched upon here. The one achieved Political Society and the system of rights founded on the idea of a natural justice between its members; the other penetrated with astonishing directness to the idea of the organic unity of the State as the expression of the unity of the individual soul and to the idea of citizenship as such a friendship or brotherhood between the members as makes the good or evil of each the good or evil of all. "Is not that the best ordered State which most nearly approaches to the condition of the individual—as in

the body when but a finger is hurt, the whole frame, drawn towards the soul and forming one realm under the ruling power therein, feels the hurt and sympathizes all together with the part affected? And when any of the citizens experience any good or evil, the whole State will make his cause their own and either rejoice or sorrow with him?" "Yes," he replied, "I agree with you that in the best ordered State there is the nearest approach to this common feeling which you describe."¹ This and parallel passages in Aristotle on justice ("fairer than the evening or the morning star"), friendship ("if citizens be friends they have no need of justice"),² and on equity³ constitute the real ethical "legacy of Greece." If nothing else were left to us we should have treasures comparable in their own field to the fragments of Sappho or the Elgin marbles in the field of lyric poetry and plastic art.

But no brilliance in the discovery and exposition of these ideas can hide the narrowness of their application and the failure of the classical ethics to rise to the conception of the value of the individual soul in whatever outward form, Greek or barbarian, bond or free, it might appear. It was left to far inferior minds living in another world to declare that "we are members of a great body: Nature has borne us akin to one another" and that "this Society mingles us men with men and deems that there is a common right of the human race."⁴ This is not the place to draw out the connection between

¹ Plato's *Republic*, p. 46.

² *Ethics*, v. 1, 15 and viii. 1, 4.

³ "Equity makes allowance for human weakness, looking not to the law but to the meaning of the law-giver, not to the act but to the intention, not to the part but to the whole. Equity remembers benefits received rather than injuries that have been suffered and benefits received rather than benefits conferred: it is patient under injustice, and is readier to appeal to reason than to force, to arbitration than to law."—*Rhetoric*, i. 13, 17.

⁴ Seneca, *Epp.* xv. 52, xviii. 2.

Stoic and Christian ethics. If we were to look to the letter alone there is hardly an expression in the Gospels or Epistles which has not its apparent counterpart in the Stoic writers. There is a profound resemblance but there is an equally profound difference. Christianity with Stoicism carries on the organic conception of human society—borrows it, perhaps,² as it appears in Paul's Epistles, from the Cilician Stoics. Like Stoicism it gives an incalculably wider range to the conception of human brotherhood as founded on the mere possession of the form and soul of a man, but in two fundamental respects it goes beyond the Stoic teaching and touches human nature at a depth which this never even at its best approaches.

To Stoicism human nature is divided against itself. Reason is not only in conflict with the natural feelings but lives in a region entirely separate from them and is pledged in the end to their obliteration. Even the highest of the emotions, pity and love, are to find no place in the heart of the Wise. "Philanthropy" certainly, but this is the love of man in his strength and isolation, not in his weakness and dependence, and is at the best but a pale reflection of the love that endureth all things, hopeth all things. "Forgiveness" this also, but there is a whole world of difference between the spirit of "Forgive them, they are all mad,"¹ and that of "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." As against all this Christianity stands for the wholeness of human nature—instinctive, emotional, intellectual. It came that man might have life and have it more abundantly; as a conquering spirit that was able to subdue all things to itself, not by suppression but by a saving transformation. All things are to be

¹ Seneca, *De Ben.*, v. 17. See Lightfoot's fine treatment of this in *The Epistles of St. Paul : Philippians*.

ours by having the whole reborn in us in a more perfect form of manhood wanting nothing. Going along with this and as part of it is the conception of the saving forces as no feelingless "reason" but as the rational passions of pity and love. Not only has passion a place; it has the central place. The stone which the Stoic builders rejected has become the head of the corner. There is no need to dwell on the point. Seeley has insisted in a masterly way on the sense in which love is the deepest principle in men's relations with one another and in which, in spite of all that can be said of our powerlessness to command our feelings, it may be said to be the first and greatest of the Commandments.

In the second place Christianity goes beyond all that went before in its conception of the Kingdom of God upon earth as a continuous growth. Seeing that the idea of society as an organic whole is the underlying principle of Greek Idealism and that of "creative reason" the fundamental note in Stoicism, it would be strange if the idea of growth and development were entirely absent in them. Neither is it. Plato conceived of a rise and progress in civilization and the Stoic made much of progress in the individual soul and the enlarging circle of the City of God. But over against this was the dark and creeping shadow of matter and the seed of decay inherent in all finite things. Both in Plato and the Stoics, as Bury has put it, "time was the enemy of man."¹ For the idea of a divine destiny awaiting the nations of men upon the earth we have to go to the Hebrew Prophets,² with their vision of a New Jerusalem to which the Gentiles shall seek. This is often referred to as an anticipation of the Christian

¹ J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress*, p. 15.

² Oddly enough hardly mentioned by Bury.

idea, but it remained a mere sketch of something remote and essentially miraculous—not to speak of the elements of nationalism that still adhered to it. On the other hand there is nothing in which the Gospel teaching goes so decisively and triumphantly beyond all that went before than the conception of the Kingdom of Heaven whether in the individual soul or in the world at large as a growth from within outwards—as something already here and yet as working always to a fuller and fuller manifestation of itself. With this conception we may say that Christianity burst the bonds of the old world and gave to the spirit of man its marching orders for the new. Henceforth time was not the enemy but the friend of man. “It is the inseparable propriety of time,” wrote Bacon, who was among the first to realize what this change meant for the modern world, “ever more and more to disclose the truth.”¹

Readers are familiar with the central place that the parable of the seed in all its forms, the idea of the Kingdom as a growth, occupies in the Gospels, in Christian literature and devotion. In order to illustrate how deeply it has sunk into the modern mind it will be sufficient for me to quote from the writer who is still its greatest exponent in the field of ethics. Speaking of the development of Christian doctrine into faith in the Kingdom of God, Kant writes: “This principle, because it contains the motive of a continual approach to perfection, bears in itself invisibly as a seed, which unfolds and scatters other seed like itself, the whole fabric which will one day illuminate and rule the world. Truth and goodness have their roots in the natural disposition of every man both in his reason and in his heart. And because of this natural affinity with the moral nature of rational beings to spread in every

¹ Quoted Bury, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

direction, obstructions arising from political and social causes which may hinder its expansion from time to time serve rather to draw all the closer the union of hearts in the good, which once it has been clearly perceived never abandons the mind.”¹

It is in these ideas then, which Christian ethics adopts from the older thought but interprets in an entirely new way, that we have to look for its essential meaning. It is in these ideas that we must find at once the continuity of Christianity with the great moral tradition of the Western World and the addition which it makes to it; the evidence that the spirit embodied in it has known how to bring forth things both new and old out of the treasury of human life. To restate them in more concrete terms and in another order :—

1. There is to be a City of God upon the earth—an order of society whose law is a justice that is founded upon love. The length and breadth of the city are to be as the length and the breadth of land and sea and it is to be all inclusive. Divisions of class and of sex, of nation and of race, will survive in it, but they will define the place which individuals and groups will occupy and the services they will render to it as a “body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part.”

2. The measure of the walls of the city is to be “the measure of a man,” but of a man in the fullness and unity of his powers, and therefore in the fullness of his freedom and the whole-heartedness of his service.

3. There is to be a continual increase of its body to the building up of itself in love, and this is to find its guarantee in the presence within it of a law other than the law of its members as separate individuals—a law

¹ *Religion Within the Limits of Pure Reason*, I. p. 7, *fin.*

revealed in its completest form in the life of the Founder, but only there revealed and recognized because it is what is deepest and most godlike in every man, awaiting only the touch of His quickening breath and ready to respond to it as deep answers to deep.

Needless to say, these ideas have suffered from endless misunderstandings and corruptions. They have illustrated in every age how the corruption of the best may be the worst. Yet their essential truth and vitality are shown by their victorious survival through all. The question which the Essays that follow seek to answer is to what extent, taken in the sense here indicated, they throw light on present-day problems and contain the promise of a way of escape from present discontents and spiritual disquietude.

III.—THE RELEVANCE OF THESE IDEAS TO THE PRESENT SITUATION

In the space that may still be permitted to this Introduction, it may be useful without encroaching on the subjects chosen by others, to try to meet one or two of the objections that are most likely to be brought against the above interpretation and the hopes that are founded upon it.

It would be too much to expect that the interpretation itself will be accepted without challenge. There are those to whom all that has been said of Christianity as an ethical principle, will seem merely a misguided attempt to take the heart out of it as a religion. "What," they will ask, "can be said for an account which leaves on one side the incarnation, redemption, a personal Saviour and a Father in Heaven? Could anything be more futile than the collection of desiccated moral commonplaces here offered with a top-dressing of

Scriptural allusions to the seeker after a faith, to oppose to the unbelief and deadness to the things of the spirit that are the real disease of the time and the source of all its troubles? ”

Natural as such an objection is, it would be founded on a misapprehension. It would indeed be a fatal one if our object here were to give a full account of all that Christianity stands for in the minds of the vast majority of its professed adherents,—of what is theological and historical as well as of what is ethical, and if further our concern were primarily with the motives through which the ethical ideas indicated above can be made effective in men’s hearts and lives. But the first of these objects falls wholly outside the scope of our purpose here, the second enters only in so far as it is included in the ideas of which we have been speaking. None of the writers in this volume is likely to undervalue Theology as the attempt to give theoretic expression to that which man feels to be the object of his deepest experience and to define its relation to his life in time. But we have felt that even to mention any of the great central ideas of Christian theology would have been to plunge into controversies which we do not desire, and which we think it entirely possible to avoid in the present connection. Our task is difficult enough without adding others to it. With regard to the second of the above objects we are profoundly aware that morality and religion draw their inspiration from the living example. Their “evidences” in the end are not philosophical ideas but the sight of what the life of a man can be and has been at its best. This was true even of the Greek philosophical ethics with which in the above the Christian has been compared. It drew its life not from Stoic logic but from the great example of “the Strength of Socrates.” So too it has

been in the East. It is Gautama Buddha, not the Sankhya philosophy, that is the "Light of Asia." This we hold to be even more profoundly true of Christianity. Its last word is not "listen to argument" but "look and be saved." But our object here is not to dwell upon this. Seeley has already done this, and in an incomparable way in *Ecce Homo*. What we are in search of is the guidance that is contained in Christianity, as above interpreted, as to the direction in which faith and inspiration must lead if they are to work for the healing of the nations in the present distracted state of the spiritual world.

The other line of objection of which it may be useful in conclusion to speak is of a different order and might be stated as follows :

"You have fixed on certain ideas as containing the core of Christian teaching. We do not deny them a certain element of truth. In other times with other manners they might find a favourable *milieu* for their appeal to the idealistic strain in human nature. In our own time the conditions of any such response are for the most part entirely absent. Men's minds are occupied with a wholly different order of ideas. In spite of lip homage to social ideals, the present generation is essentially individualistic. Freedom to think and act each for himself, greater command of the material means for physical and æsthetic enjoyment, and the 'gates of the future' open for themselves and their class—these are ideals which find little or no place even in such a revised version of Christianity as you offer us. So long as this is so, it will be a voice crying in the wilderness." The reply here must be very brief.

I believe the objection to be founded on a superficial view of the real spirit of our time and of the demands

which it makes upon its world, and that when we set these in their true light we can see that they are just the demands that find their fulfilment in the ideas of which we have been speaking.

1. It is true that freedom is the life breath of the modern spirit. "To be free, to understand, to enjoy," wrote T. H. Green, "is the claim of the modern spirit." "Only those who have known it," writes a brilliant exponent of the mind of the present generation,¹ "can understand the relief, the sense of enlightenment which comes of realizing that there is no moral impediment to the use of the natural powers to their fullest capacity." But it is a part of this enlightenment that justice can only be done to the different natural powers in so far as they are used in the service of some dominating unifying purpose. It is this demand at once for fullness and unity that is summed up in all that is being said and written at the present time about the value of *personality*. I have quoted Kant as expressing better than any other the idea that underlies the Christian conception of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. The other side of his teaching is what might be called the law of personality. "See that thou treat humanity in thy own person and in the person of others always as an end and never as a means only." Since his time this may be said to be the "growing purpose" of the age. If Kant laid too much stress on the individual as an end in himself, and some of his successors erred in the opposite direction by over-emphasizing the community, there is all the more need for an interpretation that seeks to meet this aspiration in a sense which will do justice to both sides of the ideal. I know of none better suited to achieve this object than the Christian idea of the unity and strength

¹ Stephen Ward, *The Ways of Life* (Oxford, 1920), p. 115.

of individual character that comes from the consecration of all the natural powers to the service of humanity.

2. We touch here on our second point. In a world the root of whose trouble lies in the clash of material and selfish interests between individuals, classes and nations, there may seem to be something paradoxical in the claim that this is only superficial appearance and that the underlying demand is for the opportunity for service. Yet I believe that this goes far nearer the root of the matter than the other. What else than this was the real meaning of one of the greatest movements of our time, the demand of women for higher education, for the suffrage and for the opening of the professions? Other motives were doubtless mixed up with these demands, but by far the deepest and the most universal was the desire for larger opportunities of service to the community. With the Labour Movement, in spite of appearances, it is, I believe, at bottom the same. I might appeal to the cry of the unemployed for *work*, but I should be told at once that it is wages not work that they want. That is true, but it is only half the truth. They want work and wages first, but when they have got them, they want to be sure that the work is of real and direct service to the community. It is just their doubt as to this that makes the bitterness of the class struggle. It is because they think (rightly or wrongly does not matter for the present purpose) that under the present system their services are diverted from the community to individual profit and luxury that they are so restless under it. And this is not all. The extension of the horizon from the nation to the great society of nations has brought home to the workers, as to the captains of industry, that they are producing for mankind—that they are not only “Workers of the World” but Workers *for* the World. But again they

think they see (rightly or wrongly here too does not matter) that the present system, by its competition for markets and the rivalries inherent in it, raises up barriers between nations, and instead of being a service and a blessing, has been and is sure again sooner or later to be the source of war and the heartless destruction of the wealth that is the lives of men.

It is on grounds like these that I believe that a religion, the chief corner-stone of which may be said to be "he that is greatest among you let him become as the younger, and he that is chief as he that doth serve" has a response waiting for it in the deeper heart of the present generation.

3. I have left little space to speak of the last point, perhaps the most important of all. That progress was one of the great watchwords of the last century needs no proof. A French writer called it "of all secular ideas the one that came nearest to a religion." As little is there need of proof that the present generation is in the trough of a wave of reaction against it. It is a time of disillusionment. Human nature, we are told, does not change. Our boasted progress is only skin deep. Democracy, its chief instrument, is breaking in our hands. Material science, progressive enough itself, only brings a new menace to the civilization that is built upon it.

Wide as this reaction is, I believe that it is itself only skin deep. The idea of progress appeals to something instinctive in man, and has come to stay. The faith in it is an integral part of Western Civilization. If in our own time it has suffered eclipse, the reason does not lie in any weakening of the "will to believe" but in the weakness of the foundation on which by a previous generation it was supposed to rest. So long as this consists in the mere observation of times and

seasons and in advances in the material sciences that appeal to the senses, the faith in progress will be as the seed that fell by the wayside. It is only as appeal can be made to the growing power of reason and conscience in the course of History to dominate men's conduct that it can be felt to rest on secure foundations. It is indeed just the reality of any such grôwth that in our own time seems to have been impugned by recent events. But the revolt against their apparent issue may be itself read as the most conclusive proof of the headway that has been made. Never before has so searching a wind passed over the minds of men. Never before has the world witnessed so widely spread and so deep going a protest against the spirit of selfishness and unreason in high places. What is wanted in order to give force and permanence to it is, *in the first place*, a reorientation of men's minds in regard to the things that are of real value in the world and that make for justice and peace; and, *in the second place*, the patience that comes from a keen recognition of the inevitable slowness of so great a revolution. He that believeth shall not make haste. It is precisely for these things that the third of the ideas we found in Christianity stands. It provides just the deeper foundation for the hope that the idea of progress embodies, which the philosophy of some of its earlier advocates was unable to provide. I believe that the present generation is willing and eager to respond to a teaching which appeals boldly beyond the evidence of the senses to the dominating power of the elements of good in human nature. The future is with the ethics and religion that takes its stand in this—the article of a standing or falling world. Here also, as in respect to the other claims of the modern world, Christianity may be trusted to have come not to destroy but to fulfil.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL AND SOME OF ITS COMPETITORS

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I

IF the diagnosis attempted in the last chapter may be accepted, the avowed modern dissatisfaction with the Christian moral teaching will be really of two kinds. On the one hand it is due to a misunderstanding of Christianity, for which professing Christians are no doubt mainly to blame. The Christian ideal is held to allow no real place for certain values which are perhaps recognized more clearly and asserted more uncompromisingly to-day than ever before. The critic of Christianity seeks freedom and fullness of life, and he sees in Christian ethics a system of constraints and conformities; he feels discontent with the existing social and industrial order—and he still gathers the impression that Christianity, if it does not enjoin its acceptance, at least maintains its relative unimportance. Objections of this kind can only be met by such an interpretation of the Christian ethic as will bring out more adequately what our first chapter claimed to be its fundamental ideals.

But together with this sort of criticism is another kind, due not to a misreading of the Christian ethical ideal but rather to a different reading of life. Impatience

is felt with certain elements in the Christian ideal as it is, not merely as it is too often presented or misrepresented. There is a dissatisfaction based on a genuine dissent from Christian standards of value, not least in the sphere of personal practice. Certain things in life and conduct are assigned a status whether higher or lower, which Christianity cannot award them.

These two types of criticism are often found inextricably interwoven. Misunderstanding, the cause of such frequent antagonisms, is equally itself an effect of a genuine divergence of view, and where the difference between two principles is deepest, misinterpretation of each by the other will be most prevalent, for there will be the greater scope for the distortions of passion and prejudice. No opponent of the Christian ethical ideal is at once so sincere and so thoroughgoing as Nietzsche, and between the Christian and the Nietzschean view of life, taken as a whole, there can be no final reconciliation. Yet in Nietzsche's passionate invectives against Christianity we feel that the irreducible antagonism is obscured by unconscious misrepresentations and misinterpretations, which have substituted for the true Christian ethic we would uphold, a travesty and imposture which we thank him for exposing.

In the case of an open enemy like Nietzsche the matter is still, however, comparatively simple. It is less so where we have to deal, not with avowed and fundamental opposition of standards, but rather with a partial divergence or failure of coincidence; acceptance with reservation and qualification instead of flat rejection. And that is in the main the position at the present time in this country, whatever may be the case elsewhere. The man whom we who cleave to the Christian moral ideal have to answer and if possible convince, is not so much the whole-hearted antagonist as the discontented

half-adherent, the candid friend who is perhaps neither so candid nor so friendly as he supposes. Where the Christian ethic is questioned here to-day it is because its aim and spirit are judged to be not so much wholly misguided and misdirected as one-sided. The critic is pleading perhaps rather for a shifting of the focus, a change in the emphasis upon this or that quality of character or type of conduct, than for a "breaking of the tables" such as Zarathustra proclaims.

We shall be able to recognize more clearly what the Christian ideal implies and how far it is relevant to the special aspirations of our day by examining those conceptions with which the modern mind has tended to replace it. Accordingly it will be worth while to take up one or two of the popular terms which express what may be called current ideals of character and therefore serve as standards for judgments upon conduct. For "moral unrest" would be sheer demoralization if it meant the abandonment of moral standards as such; and what we see is rather the prevalence and popularization of different and competing moral currencies. And an examination of the terms most of us are prone to use to denote the sort of character or behaviour we commend or admire will help to make clear where the differences are to be found.

Such terms are certainly not those with which the Christian moral tradition is familiar. "In case of a pinch, the mass prefer to be good fellows rather than good men"¹: and if there is something suspect about the fundamental moral notion of "goodness," the same is true *a fortiori* of the terms which bear a specifically Christian meaning. The best men of to-day (we are told by Mr. Garrod²) would be mortified if the name of

¹ J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 5.

² H. W. Garrod, *The Religion of All Good Men*, p. 336.

saint were applied to them. Very many at any rate would prefer that commendation of their conduct should adopt some other form of words than that they had acted "like a Christian." It is not that they are in open antagonism of Christianity and its moral ideal; it is rather that the meaning the word conveys somehow just fails to appeal—it omits something they value, or includes something for which they have no value.

What then are the terms of widest currency which indicate the modern Englishman's standard in matters of conduct? In the middle of the last century such a term was perhaps "respectability," but it hardly needs the satire of a Carlyle or a Dickens to reveal how smug and small was the ideal this term implied. But there are to-day at least two widely used terms, which signify standards of conduct not the less authoritative for being somewhat vague and ill-defined. These are "gentleman" and "sportsman." To act like a gentleman—to act like a sportsman—one or other of these phrases for very many people expresses the substance of the life a man should lead. Nothing (they would feel, if not admit) is gained and something is lost by substituting the words "like a Christian." "Gentlemanliness" (not of course Gentility) and "Sportsmanship" are perhaps the most prevalent moral categories in our country to-day; *moral* because used to convey judgments upon conduct, however unsystematic and casual these may be. Do they include elements of moral value for which the Christian ideal offers no place? Or does the fact that so many people think in these and similar terms rather than in those of the Christian ethical tradition simply mean that Christianity has been misconceived, a caricature being mistaken for its genuine portrait? Or do they contain certain elements of

meaning for which the Christian ideal has indeed no place because these are survivals of older moralities which the Christian ethic has superseded ?

II

Taking first the conception of the "gentleman," the questions just asked may be put concisely in this form: when we use the phrase "A Christian and a gentleman," what, if anything, of moral value is conveyed by the second term that is not implied in the first ? Is there here a mere redundancy and duplication, and if not, must we admit that the moral ideal of Christianity needs supplementation ?

An acute and not unsympathetic foreign observer of English life and culture since the war has noted as a typical expression of the English character the development of the "gentleman ideal."¹ Professor Dibelius sees in this the mediæval ideal of chivalry in civil and cultural form. He finds it to be a special achievement of the English that what was in origin, and remains in its inner essence, the ideal of a privileged class has come to be adopted as a standard far more widely by people of every rank and status. While admitting the high value of much of that for which the "gentleman-ideal" stands—honourable dealing, courage, loyalty, courtesy—he is no less clear in emphasizing what he takes to be its limitations or defects. In the first place, though no longer the monopoly of a class, enough of its original class character clings to the ideal to restrict within definite limits the sphere within which obligations are recognized. "It contains only as much of Christianity as has become the undisputed heritage of European

¹ Wilhelm Dibelius, *England*.

civilized society, but retreats from the more drastic Christian demands." And finally it is an ideal "without any relation to the powers of mind"; the "gentleman" stands to art and science as patron and amateur, not as devotee and disciple.

We are not concerned to ask how far the ideal of the gentleman is a peculiarly British product. It may certainly be plausibly urged that other peoples have developed very similar conceptions. But the foreign critic's diagnosis suggests certain questions worth considering. Is the ideal of the gentleman still vitiated by restricting implications of class and rank? Is it at bottom incompatible with Christianity? And does it involve a half-hearted and superficial view of the place the development of the higher human faculties should have in life?

It is impossible to answer the first of these questions in the negative. When Samuel Richardson was asked by his female admirers to depict a good man, it would never have occurred to him to look for his ideal good man among the "lower orders"; and we are never allowed to forget the social rank of Sir Charles Grandison. The more superficial suggestions of good breeding, polished manners, cultured taste have doubtless no longer any essential place in the meaning of the word "gentleman" as a term of moral appraisal; and it is no accident that "genteel," once a commendatory, is now almost a derisory epithet. But when Thomas Arnold, at the outset of his career as Headmaster of Rugby, told his colleagues: "What we must look for here is, first, religious and moral principles; secondly, gentlemanly conduct; thirdly, intellectual ability,"¹ it is difficult not to see in his words the recognition of a

¹ Quoted by Mr. Lytton Strachey in *Eminent Victorians*.

sort of caste morality applicable to a certain social rank, without which mere Christian goodness would be insufficient.¹

It would be easy to exaggerate the degree to which the ideal of the gentleman is permeated by suggestion of class and caste and the resultant limitations and discrimination of obligation. There is always the example of Don Quixote, "the finest gentleman of all the realms of fact and fable," to show how small a part they may play. But where the ideal of the gentleman assumes a central and dominant place as presenting a way of life and providing a code of conduct, there its class character becomes unmistakable, not in the sense "there are persons to whom a gentleman need not act as such," but in the sense "there are persons who need not—and cannot be expected to—act as a gentleman must." The gentleman-ideal in a word, though it need have nothing of snobbery about it, retains inevitably (and in the best sense of the term) an *aristocratic* quality.

There is no need to emphasize the incompatibility of this with an ideal of which the note is universality, and which is a standing protest against caste. Let us pass to the second question and ask whether in truth the diagnosis is correct which finds this ideal of the "gentleman" to be in other respects also, repugnant to the full Christian moral demand.

In his book, *The Religion of all Good Men*, Mr. H. W. Garrod has disentangled into three distinct traditions the complex of elements that go to make up current morality. The Greek contributes the ideal of culture, the refined development of faculty for the

¹ The reverse side of this is well brought out in Mr. Galsworthy's play *Loyalties*. There the representatives of the "gentleman-ideal," while not exactly screening their guilty fellow from criminal proceedings cannot help taking up a special attitude with regard to his case which they would not take in the case of an "outsider."

business of life; the Christian, an austerity of moral earnestness always at war with "the world, the flesh and the devil" but never (we gather) safe from passing over into asceticism, and an enemy rather than a friend to progress in social life. It is neither to the Greek nor the Christian tradition that we owe the virile ideal of honour and chivalry, which he finds to be the real ethic of the northern races. And he sets this "Gothic" element in definite contrast both to the Christian and the Greek, as something independent in origin, and ultimately superior in value to anything these other moral ideals have to offer.

Mr. Garrod accordingly agrees with the foreign critic we have quoted in deriving the ideal of the gentleman—for it is in effect this that he is expounding—from the tradition of feudal chivalry that owes its peculiar character to the northern peoples, and in contrasting its contents sharply with that of the Christian ethic. We are not concerned with this derivation: but is the asserted contrast a just one? Fealty and courage, generosity, magnanimity, gentleness—these at least are indissolubly part of the Christian ideal of character. Is there something in the notion of "honour" that these do not comprise? If there is such a residue of meaning it would appear to display itself simply as what we may call disparagingly *pride*, or, by the less depreciatory name of *dignity*.

It is here, over and above the suggestion of class and caste limitation that clings to the term, though connected with it, in an obvious way, that we may perhaps find the non-Christian element in the "gentleman-ideal"; and this (it may be added) as much as anything is what gives it its appeal to-day. The fear of humiliation and indignity is very widespread—it is the reverse side of that demand for an expanding and less pre-

carious life of which mention has already been made. Humility is felt to be, as Nietzsche would have it, cowardice turned into a virtue, and the ideal character is thought of as safeguarded and accoutred with the outward unmistakable signs of the serene and successful life, with "position" and power, prestige or prowess. The more external and material advantages—birth, wealth, social consideration—coveted as they may be for their own sake become also valued as symbols of something more inward and personal, a temper of the mind; and when it has come to be recognized that "a man's a man for a' that," and these crude and superficial appurtenances of the good life have been thought away as having no moral quality, this thing they have symbolized remains as an element in the ideal life as it is commonly interpreted. It is an assurance of possession not merely of wealth or rank or power but of values of whatever kind, a certainty of position and anchorage in a world that threatens to submerge the personalities of men. In its corruption this assurance of possession or position becomes a peculiarly odious self-complacency or self-importance, and displays itself as that external "dignity" of demeanour which it is so easy to satirize and caricature. What is at its best a quality of inner poise falls away all too commonly into a more or less self-conscious pose, as when we say of a man that he "stands on his dignity." It is just because the real dignity of the gentleman is unself-conscious, an inward temper of the spirit rather than an outward attitude to the world, that it makes such a strong and not unreasonable appeal to the mind of to-day.

How can it be urged that there is anything in this "dignity" alien if not hostile to the demands of the Christian ideal? If this still be maintained—and such a claim may perhaps seem perverse or presumptuous—

it can only be on two grounds. The Christian ideal, no less than the "gentleman ideal," holds out the assurance of possession; but it is possession *by*, rather than possession *of*, the faith that the personal life is supported by, as it is claimed by, an eternal reality, and has thereby access to unchallengeable values transcending while including the social order.² By contrast the temper we have been considering appears not indeed self-centred, but man-centred and mundane, the expression of a too human preoccupation.

Closely connected with this criticism is the other. In contrast to the Christian moral ideal we have in the gentleman-ethic a conception essentially static. It is conservative rather than revolutionary. We think of "honour" most naturally as something to defend or preserve, and "dignity" (as we have seen) as balance, equilibrium, repose upon possession already secured. We miss the spirit of dynamic movement, the abandon and ardour that animates the Christian ethic, the eagerness for the unachieved. And perhaps in this connection we may admit some truth in our foreign critic's third contention noted above, that the ideal "gentleman" renders less than their due to the activities of the mind, to science, art, music, scholarship, the creation of beauty, and the pursuit of knowledge. For if the ideal has, as has been suggested, a too static character, it will inevitably follow that it can give no sufficient place to activities which are of their very essence dynamic, exploration, search, adventure. The conscience of artist or scholar or scientist cannot any more than that of the saint, be thought of quite in terms of the honour of the gentleman.

Yet, it will be said, is not the ideal of chivalry that of the adventurer, the knight errant? And has not Don Quixote himself given his name to a reckless devotion of an ideal, which thinks nothing of humiliation

or indignity? Indeed Don Quixote is here the exception that proves the rule. To the deep irony of his creator, he is much too reckless an idealist to be perfectly sane. Quixotry is not a quality we think of as essential to the ideal of the gentleman; but something of Quixotry is (we would urge) essential to the Christian ideal. Crazy or not, we love and admire the Knight of the Woeful Countenance more than all the men of sanity and dignity with whom he has dealings. Perhaps it is because he is a better Christian.

III

In considering the ideal of the gentleman it has been difficult and it may strike many as unfair, to make the contrast between this ideal and what we take to be the content of the Christian ideal either sharp or clear. We have concluded that if there is any element of meaning in the former that is absent from the latter it is because the notion of a gentleman includes features which have no value, and have indeed when stressed an actual disvalue, for the Christian ethic. It is only fair to add that the term gentleman as often applied is not intended to convey these suggestions. Yet they may still give nuances to the meaning of the word which are none the less significant because they have not in usage the crudity and explicitness which our analysis has perforce tried to give them.

We have now to turn to examine a different conception which, like that of the "gentleman," affords a criterion of approval and disapproval, praise and blame, in a word is a moral standard, capable of supplying some sort of code of conduct, and which has indeed a much more popular vogue than the other. This is the conception of the "good sportsman."

This notion has, of course, a far wider currency than

“ sport ” in the narrower sense of the term ; nor does it provide a merely masculine standard. “ Be a sport ! ” is an appeal to a standard of conduct for women as well as for men. What does the conception signify ? It would appear that here again we have a rather vague and complex connotation to analyse. And we shall find that while one element of value lacking, or latent, in the notion of gentleman is here present, there is another factor of meaning present which comes into direct collision with the Christian ideal, as this has been interpreted, and indeed with any serious ethical standard.

It is clear, however, that much of what we mean by “ good sportsmanship ” is already contained in the ideal life as Christianity represents it. Cheerfulness in the acceptance of mischances ¹ is only thought of as more characteristic of the sportsmanlike than of the Christian temper, if we assume (as is still too commonly assumed) that reverence must always be expressed in a sombre and abashed gravity. Again we have in the “ sportsmanship ” ideal an emphasis on loyalty, a loyalty that scorns to “ let down a pal,” fair play and honourable dealing with comrade or competitor. We merely note that here, rather more evidently than in the case of the gentleman, these virtues are subjected to disconcerting limitations in the range of their application. The sportsman, in being true to his comrade in an undertaking, may show little sympathy with the outsider. The loyalty is something less than the loyalty of the Christian, just as “ playing the game ” is an inadequate metaphor to suggest all the obligations of justice.

Where the ideal of sportsmanship has a real advantage over that of the gentleman is in its emphasis upon

¹ *Webster's Dictionary* gives as part of its definition of “ Sportsman ” : “ A good loser and a graceful winner.”

venturesomeness. The "sportsman" is a man not only ready to take risks but eager to make risks, to go out to meet hazards. In contrast the traditional good man of the Christian tradition appears, to one who accepts the ideal of sportsmanship, as an exasperatingly tame, smug personage, always playing for safety, accumulating merit on altogether too easy terms, like an unearned income from a safe investment. But it should not be necessary to repeat that, however true this is of professing Christians, it is a mere travesty of what Christian morality means and demands. Christianity has no more use for a safely invested virtue than it has for a "fugitive and cloistered virtue." "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath," the motto on the leaden casket, has a very Christian echo. And a just analysis even of the complex tangle of motives behind the present-day practice of gambling—so general in its appeal, and so difficult to resist—would recognize alongside much that is selfish or unworthy, some trace of this element of real moral value—an impatience of dull security, a welcome to the uncertain and hazardous.¹ And for this there is room, there is even need, in the Christian moral ideal.

It is one of the paradoxes of Christianity that this readiness to accept risks that are real risks is combined with that assurance of possession and sense of security upon which we have already dwelt.

There is one element, however, in the "sportsmanship" ideal which, while it gives the conception much of its attractiveness, seems to be in definite antagonism to any serious moral standard. Whatever other quality

¹ This is often something better than the merely morbid craving for excitement with which it is sometimes identified. The element of idealism in the standard of "sportsmanship" and the latent moral possibilities in the "gambling spirit" have been eloquently presented in Dr. L. P. Jacks' story *The Legends of Smokeover*.

the "good sportsman" may lack, he is at least tolerant. He is a "good fellow," not necessarily in the sense of a social asset, but in the sense that he does not obtrude harassing moral demands or presume to pass embarrassing moral judgments. He takes his company as he finds it, makes ready allowance for foible, fault and crime alike, and if he fails to improve, at least does not abash his associates. Among any average company of men or women to-day, in the railway-carriage, or workshop, or race-meeting, no precept of the New Testament would secure such whole-hearted acceptance as the command "Judge not." A modern Pecksniff would have to adopt the cant of tolerance in place of the cant of moral exhortation, and would certainly talk a much less unctuous language.

Influences that have made for moral scepticism in other respects have indeed but emphasized the authority of the moral principle, that it is wrong to judge another. The sapping of other prohibitions has lent prestige to this. In a morally disillusioned world censoriousness is almost the capital sin, and the deliberate obtrusion of moral standards is accounted censoriousness. Rather than incur the most odious reproach of priggishness and Pharisaism we are inclined to take as our pattern the "sportsman" who exacts of conduct as little as he expects.

Tolerance is an excellent thing so far as it goes; but what has to be asked is, the motive for it and the spirit animating it. It is one thing to refuse to judge others in the sense of assigning merit or demerit to an individual because the full facts upon which alone a judgment could be based are inevitably beyond our reach. A judgment which pronounces moral sentence upon an individual is itself a piece of immoral presumptuousness. But it is quite another thing to refuse to form, and if need be to

express, judgments upon conduct, when the real reason for the refusal is that we are shirking the whole moral predicament, from either sloth or cowardice or the desire not to say unpleasant things. A large tolerance is only admirable when it is based upon a wide and solid understanding of human nature and a frank acceptance of moral issues. When it is

Rather, large
By absence of the continent marge
Than greatness of the thing contained,

it becomes a mere excuse for evasion and haziness of mind.

If the repugnance to exigence in matters of conduct does not mean this, it springs from sentimentalism quite as often as from a genuine moral scepticism. We may perhaps give the name of sentimentalism to the attitude of mind which regulates behaviour by the effect the action is calculated to have upon the *feelings*, whether of the agent or another, rather than upon the man as a whole. Ordinary Hedonism will be one form of sentimentalism in this sense. We have another, whenever—rejecting, perhaps, the common hedonist criterion—we aim rather at an easy conscience, the feeling of virtuousness, than at virtue; or again when, sentimentalizing revenge, we subordinate all other considerations in the infliction of punishment to that of producing pain or distress in the victim. But perhaps as common as any form of moral sentimentalism is that which makes decisive motive the avoidance or suppression of disquieting ethical truths which would cause unpleasantness if obtruded. It seems undeniable that the tolerance of the “good sportsman” has something of this sentimentalism about it.

And in this connection a word may be added upon that ethical movement which has more than any other to meet the charge of sentimentalism. The term has become a taunt used to discredit every new humanitarian endeavour, and more particularly every effort to secure the humaner treatment of animals. Few taunts are surer of their effect, and the charge is just true enough to be damaging. The fact that susceptibility to pleasure and pain is in some sort the greatest common measure between human and animal life may lead some of those who feel most acutely the tragedy of preventable suffering to count obligation too much in terms of the alleviation of pain by whomsoever felt, and too little in terms of the positive furtherance of life in all its scale of values. But this admitted, the charge that humanitarian ethics is vitiated by sentimentalism has little warrant. It is usually but a more combative expression of the opposite sentimentalist attitude already considered, which, rather than face a disquieting moral challenge, with its threat to established custom and vested interests, would ignore the whole problem presented by the animal world and our relations to it. But this problem cannot be even summarily discussed here. It provides, as perhaps few others do, a touchstone for the quality and limitations of a moral standard, and perhaps nowhere else is the reality of moral progress so clearly demonstrated. Here, as elsewhere, the Christian ideal has nothing to fear by a comparison with competing ethical standards. But just as the gradual decay of the institution of slavery in the early centuries of our era was all too little the result of a frontal assault from the side of Christianity, so here it is humiliating to recognize how much of the advance towards an attitude to the animal world which is at once more humane and more Christian has been due not to the

direct challenge of any Christian Church, but to the patient educative work of reformers professing no allegiance to Christianity.

IV

By the foregoing examination of one or two common terms of moral appraisement we have sought to show that the Christian ideal of the good life need not fear comparison with those conceptions which are in a measure its popular substitutes to-day. The elements of value in these are part and parcel of the Christian ideal of conduct; the points of difference represent, either a revolt against a distortion of this ideal (a revolt which a truer interpretation of it cannot but endorse) or the survival of an attitude to life which Christian ethics can only reject as narrow or insufficient.

But it may with some reason be objected that this sort of comparison is too artificial and abstract to be of much service. No one was, after all, ever convinced of the superiority of one moral ideal over another by such a piecemeal analysis of values and defects. An ideal of conduct is accepted not as an abstract conception but as a way of life that has been experimentally verified and justified. If it is approved it is because it has proved itself in lives actually lived. Behind the conception and idea is the person whose life showed forth their import and value and power. The part played by personal example is seen not only in the higher and more profound "ideals of conduct," but wherever a standard is set to which men feel called to conform. Even etiquette and deportment have their inspiring examples and models, and the tradition of the English Prize Ring of a hundred years ago must have been kept

as high as it was (or prevented from sinking lower than it did) by the personal example of the pattern prize-fighter, "Gentleman Jackson." But most of all is this so when we come to the ideals of deepest significance and widest range. It was not only the ethical doctrines of Socrates that were the inspiration of Greek thought and practice for six hundred years, but the life he lived by them, and its culmination in the death he died for them.

And so turning to the Christian moral ideal we have to remind ourselves that this cannot be summarized as a set of propositions or dissected into this or that element of value. It can be best understood when seen in its most personal realization in the life of the Gospels. The figure of Jesus presents in a living unity whatever of excellence there may be in the popular ideals of conduct of to-day, and exposes as no abstract scheme could do their limitations and insufficiencies. Assured serenity is his and a more than princely gentleness, yet not a trace of the "superior person." He cares no more for dignified company than for dignified postures: he is reproached for his partiality for the society of "outsiders." But with all his genius for companionship and fellowship and his obvious delight in the common give-and-take of human intercourse, there is never a suspicion of sentimentality, no evasion of moral issues, in his attitude either to his special friends and followers or to those numberless others with whom his relations were less intimate and personal. That fellowship of impatient, diverse, and not too tractable men, could never have been sustained so triumphantly except upon a basis of inspired candour and courage. And that ministry of charity could never have been maintained in such increasing power except by an "enthusiasm of humanity" too much concerned to save the whole person

to be always sparing of his feelings. And finally in the moral ideal which the life of Jesus exemplified the unflinching readiness to face risks to the uttermost reveals not a disdain of life or an impatience with its dull monotonies but a determination to bestow it ever more widely and in ever greater abundance.

CHAPTER III

GOODNESS, BEAUTY AND TRUTH

HELEN WODEHOUSE, M.A., D.Phil.

I

“THERE is to be a City of God upon the earth. . . . The measure of the walls of the city is to be the measure of a man, but of a man in the fullness and unity of his powers. . . .”¹ This is not merely, or primarily, an event in the future—the City is to come into being in every moment of the good life. The pattern is not merely laid up in heaven to descend after a thousand years; it is to be worked out day by day.

Such a creative outward-looking conception of the good life, as consisting in building a City or serving a Kingdom, is well fitted to our experience. It fits this better and more easily, for instance, than the technical phrase “self-realization”; for a man or an animal or an angel, in the normal exercise of his powers, has his attention fixed not on himself as their focus or source, but on their object or their sphere. In playing, in fighting, in finding-out, in seeking food, seeking possessions, seeking a mate, in making and caring for the nest or the hole or the home, elder and younger brothers alike concentrate on the game and the battle, on the

¹ Introduction, p. 26.

thing sought, on the thing loved and the thing to be made. And when a man's instincts work out into complex and permanent interests and the work of a lifetime, this objective absorption normally still holds. This is one of the simplest exhibitions of the fundamental law that life and self and soul are saved only by being lost. Our ineradicable need to serve comes out in the highest and in the meanest lives : a man must make something, if it is only money ; must build something, if it is only a palace of pleasure, or a refuge. He begins making a fortune to please himself, and finds himself going on with it to please the fortune. The Christian works no harder, but builds on a larger plan.

The social implication in City and Kingdom fits well also, for we find such an implication in almost every instinct and power. If we play, we soon want a play-fellow ; if we fight, we may not need a personal enemy, but a comrade-in-arms makes all the difference. If we find out something, we want to tell about it. We need mate and child and friend, to love and be loved, to protect and to be protected ; to lead and to follow ; to laugh at and to laugh with.

The good life, then, is at once creative and social. The two characteristics overlap, but on pain of self-stultification the social must not swallow the creative. Is all good social ? Yes, in one of its aspects. Does good life consist in living for others ? No ; for such a life, with no more positive content, would go out like smoke. To help others is to help them to something ; to some joyous fulfilment of the powers of man. These powers ask for fulfilment through ourselves also, and find it, normally and ideally, when all our hands are set co-operatively to a worthy purpose ; a work that rises into play. A mother living merely for her children

would defeat even the end as she conceived it. Mother and children together must build the home ; a corner in the City of God.

II

Consider now the position of Beauty and Knowledge. Natural instinct, finding new room in the mind of man, grows and flowers into interest and purpose and ideal. A situation under man's hand is not dead matter but seeks to become something more than itself, to fulfil its possibilities. Beauty and Knowledge are typical contents of the City, since it is built by man who is born to See and to Make and to Find Out.

They are typical contents, though not apparently exhaustive of the whole ; while covering the ideal of many situations, they hardly cover all. Our words for ideals, indeed, are rather scanty. Beauty, Knowledge, Love, Worship, we can enumerate ; but can we find any single words to cover what these leave uncovered in a few "situations" taken at random : the ideal of good fiction, of comedy, of navigation, of statesmanship, of the building of the Forth Bridge, of a few friends gathered by a winter fireside, of the joys in Browning's "Saul" or in Rupert Brooke's "Great Lover" ? A distinguished writer speaks of "a pattern of cricket laid up in heaven." It is interesting to notice how often we fall back on the term "reality." "A real statesman," we say ; or "real comfort." Or, in much the same sense, we name the species—"fine engineering," or "a good novel," or possibly "*some* cricket." We say perhaps less naturally that *Macbeth* or *Hamlet* is beautiful than that it is essential tragedy. We feel the situation trying to fulfil its own nature and promise ; to be itself. Sir John Falstaff fulfils some ideal, but

what is its name? Only, apparently, "Falstaff." Meanwhile our lack of general terms is apt to give a certain abstract and esoteric air to those we have. "Beauty" and "Truth" may suggest something remote and self-conscious, removed from the plain man's life. Yet the pit from which they were digged is simply the use, as full and harmonious as possible, of man's natural powers. A child wants to make and to admire and to know, far beyond his immediate practical needs. Athens grew from the paleolithic cave. The city of Hebrew dreams had borders of pleasant stones. If we demand that art and science should justify themselves by contributing to social good, we must begin by counting art and science themselves as part of society's good.¹ Beauty and Truth have their place, and a leading place, in the Kingdom, with the other ideals which are harder to name. "Christianity stands for the wholeness of human nature—instinctive, emotional, intellectual. It came that man might have life and have it more abundantly."²

III

The morally good life consists in the service of the Kingdom, but nobody can see or serve the whole Kingdom at once. We have to concentrate to some extent upon our own corner, keeping a general idea of

¹ A student's essay illustrates quaintly the missing of this point. As a science graduate, he had been asked to consider whether a training in science would make a man more able (e.g.) to appreciate English literature. To such a man, he replies, "the purposive nature of things will always prove attractive, and in nearly every subject there is some part which is purposive in character. Even in English, where the aim is generally that of æsthetic production, there is much that is purposive; the 'modern' drama of Drinkwater, Shaw and Galsworthy being examples of purposive production." The first sentence had led me to hope that the internal purposiveness of a flower or a crystal was going to be recognized even in a play of Shakespeare.

² Introduction, p. 23.

the form of the whole. Now it is a curious failing of many dutifully-minded persons that, while keeping their view of this form and position, and faithfully maintaining the attitude and direction which this outline prescribes, they tend to drop out large portions of the content even of their own corner, and make their duty almost an empty shell. I have tried to analyse this state of mind in myself. "I must do my duty to-day." "What is your duty?" "To work hard and be kind." "To work hard—at what? for what? To be kind—in what way? by opening what doors? Do those doors not ask for your own entrance also?" The merely dutiful state of mind seems to find such questions an impertinence. For some other minds, the daily idea of duty seems to be largely negative; to consist of restrictions and refrainings. These are needed, yet without a positive the negative is meaningless. For such persons, and for all of us in such moods, the Kingdom we serve would be almost vacant and worthless, except for the splendid paradox that even a narrow and ignorant will-to-serve forms in itself some content for that Kingdom. But it is far enough, evidently, from being a sufficient content even for the very smallest corner. The good will must be directed towards, and in, a life worth living.

The opposite fault arises in those who have firm hold of some rich content but omit the form of the whole. Every element in the Kingdom has worth in itself; each may claim our concentration, and partial forgetfulness of the rest, in its own time and turn; but we must not forget altogether, and lastingly, or the worth will fade even from what we hold in our hand. Even the parts of the whole (as even the form of the whole itself) must be ready to die in their turn if they are to live.

In the combats which from time to time are given

such names as the conflict of Art and Morality, or Passion and Reason, or Nature and Civilization, or Paganism and Christianity, we seem usually to find the combatants enmeshed in these two opposite faults of thought. Often, though not always, the battle originates with the emptiness of a world made by sincerely dutiful people ; with its barbed-wire entanglements of restrictions enclosing nothing. Then the youth or the poet or the artist or the lover revolts on behalf of some splendour or some peace which seems to have no bonds with this tediousness.

Outworn heart, in a time outworn,
Come clear of the nets of wrong and right,
Laugh heart again in the grey twilight,
Sigh, heart, again in the dew of the morn.

There can be no abstract answer except to an abstract conflict, and every concrete battle must work itself out on its own ground. But perhaps those who write and read this book are more of the moralist than of the artist type, and may find it helpful to make certain reminders to themselves. We must be very careful to preserve, or to reach, richness of content in our conception of good life. The Kingdom must include beauty and laughter and impulse and effectiveness, and the passion of adventure and creation and discovery, and the "time to stand and stare." It must include the racehorse and the drayhorse and the stallion as well as the cabhorse. We must be willing to give large room (failing very strong reasons against it) for separate contents to develop themselves. (Remember how the fourth-century Greek Puritan looked askance at music without words—music taking wings of its own.)¹ Thus,

¹ See, e.g., W. Boyd, *History of Western Education*, p. 24, on the opposition to flute-playing.

for instance, in the conversation of the young we must be willing that an argument should be followed "whithersoever it leads." It is singularly irritating to have elders intervene for the good of the debaters instead of the good of the debate.

Again, in a slightly different battle, we must avoid the injustice of supposing that the artist or the student, who cuts across the standards of his family or society, is being selfish in the popular sense. As the creator asks himself not "What do I want?" but "What does this curve, or this melody, need to complete it?" so the specialist is primarily standing, not for egoist rights, but for the rights of that part of reality which he loves and serves. We may stimulate the growth of a truer and more defiant selfishness by treating him as if this were already the matter with him. Of course the practical problem of adjusting the different claims may be very difficult for all parties.¹

Finally, we must beware of a fundamental confusion. The conflict, if any, arises always from the competition of two positive goods, which through some narrowness of circumstance in our finite life cannot both have their claims fulfilled as they stand. It is an issue between the love of truth and the comfort of a parent, or the creation of beauty and the education of a child, or our love of one person and our loyalty to another; or between an immediate and urgent gain on the one hand, and support on the other hand of that social standard and machinery which protects most gains. Art or Science or Instinct or Passion competes first with some concrete good on its own level; even perhaps bearing its own name; and it is only in the second place, and as a result of this incompatibility, that it can ever con-

¹ The whole problem of conflicting claims is more fully treated in a subsequent chapter.

flict with Morality or the Good Will. Unless we are deliberately using Morality in some sense much narrower than that of Goodness,¹ we can make nothing but confusion by classing certain contents of the Kingdom as specifically moral and certain others (art and science for instance) as specifically non-moral. Morality consists in promoting the best attainable form of all positive goods, in the organic whole of the Kingdom. It does not stand as competitor with any of them; rather it is the chief which must be servant. Our sense of duty must come in to support a right solution of the primary conflict; not to determine that solution, which can only be determined by the issue amongst the concrete contents themselves, in the context of all the circumstances which they affect. We have to seek and ensue, to the best of our ability, that outcome which will lead to the richest and most harmonious world.

So, except only where specific reasons of our finiteness cause it, there can be no rivalry between Art and Morality, or Nature and Civilization; for the business of morality includes the service of Art, and civilization exists not to repress natural impulse but to give it room to grow straight and fine to its full stature; and in the reasonable life passion has not only a place but the central place;² and for paganism as well as for Judaism, Christianity came not to destroy but to fulfil.

Where specific reasons do prevent the fulfilment of one claim without injustice to wider claims, there can be no short rule to settle the matter. We have only the experience of the race and the individual to teach us, when we meet it with an honest mind, how things hang together in this world; how nothing can with

¹ Some writers on ethics do so use it for technical purposes.

² Introduction, p. 23. ♀

impunity cut itself off from the "close painful texture of life"; how solitary dedication, or mutual passion, is almost inevitably starved or distorted in the end if wholly prevented from blending with a wider whole of human intercourse and service. My duty towards Love (or Truth, or Justice, or Beauty), says the ardour of youth, is to believe in him, to reverence him, and to love him with all my heart and soul and strength; to worship him, to put my whole trust in him, and to serve him truly all the days of my life. It is a fine creed, and will take us far. Only in this complex world we find we may not give our whole trust to any finite spirit; we need the spirit of the Kingdom as a whole. In so far as any of these names can be expanded to stand for this, all is well. But to prevent ambiguity we generally use another Name.

IV.—CERTAIN PROBLEMS OF PRACTICE

A. National Standards of Life.

In so far as the Kingdom is coming into being, each part of a nation in its ways of living will give an increasing proportion of room to something more than material comfort. Beauty and Knowledge press for some place in every community above the status of starving refugees and in almost every life that has not been badly demoralized, or that is not crushed by actual pain or hunger or extreme fatigue. We probably recognize now, for the most part, that no society is healthy in which the extreme cramping of these higher elements is normal for any class or sex or age. Probably, also, few of us are yet content with the condition of our present society in this respect; and very few would suggest, with a lady I met fourteen years ago, "Don't you think we are civilizing the lower orders too much?"

In respect of a class above the poorest, probably again we are not content (what enthusiast will ever be content with his neighbours?). But the general charge that seems often to be brought, that modern democracy and modern progress are inimical to truth and beauty, is tangled with misapprehensions. Ruskin and Matthew Arnold indeed have a message for other generations than their own; and Ibsen, and possibly even Sinclair Lewis, will always be worth re-reading. But their rebukes seem to touch partly the permanent weakness of human nature in failing to live up to the best it can conceive; partly some faults which cling not to enterprise or education but to the lack of them; and partly some results of the past and present organization of commerce and industry—organization which has profoundly changed during the last 150 years, and which is still profoundly changing. Many things will depend on the direction which those changes finally take; but, to the mind of the present writer at any rate, the future is full of hope.¹ The weakness of human nature will always be with us, and its higher interests will always need guardianship—which the intelligence and the growing experience of the human race should be able to provide. We shall lay the greater stress on every public service which forwards these interests, and shall try to pay our rates the more willingly. It would be sad to believe in a natural enmity between beauty and democracy, “the very name of which,” said a character in Herodotus, “is so beautiful.”

Some imaginative sympathy will always be needed if we are to do justice to public opinion and common standards of life, and in general to the man in the street. Mere indiscriminate condemnation will take us nowhere,

¹ Provided always that another world-war does not break civilization and its hopes into fragments,

and we cannot even draw hard lines, dividing opinions into true and false, or visible objects into good and bad. In studying actual ways of thought, we must fall back continually upon qualifying phrases: "in so far as . . ."; "feeling after. . . ." "*Quicquid petitur, petitur sub specie boni*" is true in æsthetics as in morals; if we choose a thing, it is because of something good that we see in it. Even yellow calceolarias, and the more simpering pictures of ladies and children, are cherished partly at any rate because of some beauty felt in them; beauty not necessarily all of a visual kind. On the intellectual side, a man of small range of knowledge may have a fundamental sanity and common sense, and a man of small vocabulary may possess a truth in the sense that within his range he lives by it; or he may grip one bit of sound doctrine though he cannot proceed much beyond it. Stevenson's fable called "Something In It" is worth studying, like most of his fables.¹

At any rate, we must be prepared to adapt ourselves and be patient, and expect progress chiefly through large-scale factors which touch many sides of life. "What is wanted . . . in nine cases out of ten" (wrote Bernard Bosanquet to the Ethical Society in 1887) "is not moral suasion . . . but new resources in life, intellect, and feeling. . . . A man is what he is made of, and he is not made of what he hears once a week, but of what habitually goes into him. It is this which in my judgment we ought to aim at transforming,

¹ It is the only one with a moral in verse :

The sticks break, the stones crumble,
The eternal altars tilt and tumble,
Sanctions and tales dislimn like mist
About the amazed evangelist.
He stands unshook from age to youth
Upon one pin-point of the truth.

by organizing the material of noble life, so as to bring it within the reach of all." Or, as Professor Muirhead says,¹ it is not so much a matter of "listen to argument" as "look and be saved." Most of us, if we are to be saved, need a great many chances of looking.

V

Such large-scale factors must be allowed to act generously and widely if beauty and truth in the national life are to be widely profited. If we do allow them so to act, we may look for many interwoven gains, beyond and between and beneath the points of immediate application. Restrictions are continually urged upon us. "*Educate the few who are worth it, and do not waste money on the rest.*" If to be worth it means to be able to profit by it, where shall we draw the line? (though it may well be that different minds and bodies need different kinds of education.) If we do draw the line round a gifted few, do we wish to leave them in a wholly ignorant and unsympathetic world? Those who work at adult education soon learn that some additional hours of tuition may often help a man most if they are given to his wife. "*Promote ideal instead of material ends.*" Again, how shall we draw the dividing line? How much of the housing agitation is materialist, and how much comes from the craving for a measure of human decency and seamliness. Where does the division fall in

the lovely city,
And the little house on the hill,
And the waste and the woodland beauty,
And the happy fields we till,

or in the visions of an older publicist speaking in a time

¹ Introduction, p. 29

of dearth, anarchy and unemployment, amongst "heaps of rubbish," in a ruined city of refugees: "There shall be the seed of peace; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew. Ye shall invite every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig-tree. . . . There shall yet old men and old women sit in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age, and the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."

"*At any rate, intellect and taste are small matters in comparison with character.*" Teachers know, or should know, how interest deepening into purpose strengthens every side of personality, giving a hold and a footing in the universe. From the evil growths of the starved mind on the one hand, to the reformatory schoolgirl on the other who leaves off telling lies because her health and eyesight are put right and because she finds a handicraft in which she can excel, we see the bearing of the humanizing of life. Not that beauty and knowledge are merely means to chastity and truth-telling, but that the Kingdom is so organic a whole that any part of it, entering the life of a nation or a class or an individual, may be found helping any other part to grow.

VI

B. Professional Services.

We need not spend many words on the contribution to the Kingdom which has to be made by those whose profession consecrates them to create or to discover. They are to enrich the world by their work, and observe faithfully their professional duties of courage, patience, generosity, humility—humility to acknowledge mistakes, and humility even to be ready to make mistakes

in public, if that will best serve the general cause of truth. About the same time that I read Sinclair Lewis's striking novel, *Martin Arrowsmith*, with its description, evidently inspired from within, of physiological research work, and its insistence on perfection of research before publication, I was interested also in a very able article¹ in which one distinguished economist commented on another, and presented the complementary view to Mr. Lewis's, necessary perhaps for a different science :—

He was too little willing to cast his half-baked bread on the waters, to trust in the efficacy of the co-operation of many minds, and to let the big world draw from him what sustenance it could. . . . He was too much afraid of being wrong, too thin-skinned towards criticism, too easily upset by controversy even on matters of minor importance. . . . This fear of being open to correction by speaking too soon aggravated other tendencies. Yet after all there is no harm in being sometimes wrong—especially if one is promptly found out. . . . This quality was but the defect of the high standard he never relaxed . . . of scientific accuracy and truth. . . . I depreciated Jevons' *Political Economy* above on the ground that it was no more than a brilliant brochure. Yet it was Jevons' willingness to spill his ideas, to flick them at the world, that won him . . . his unrivalled power of stimulating other minds. . . . Economists must leave to Adam Smith alone the glory of the Quarto, must pluck the day, fling pamphlets into the wind, write always *sub specie temporis*, and achieve immortality by accident, if at all.²

Nor need we spend much time on those who teach ; whether in the home, in the school, in pulpit or lecture-room or concert-hall, or through the printing-press. The Kingdom can live only in experience, and these are building it. We might lay some special stress perhaps on the service rendered by good journalism, not only in spreading interests and supporting good causes, but in forwarding that part of truth and justice

¹ Reprinted in *Memorials of Alfred Marshall*.

² Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Journal*, September 1924.

which consists in mutual understanding. I cannot resist quoting in illustration from a tiny sketch in an evening newspaper, which certainly enlarged my understanding, and which throws some light also on class standards of life :

If you have lived in the North, though the tragic "Men Entombed" will hold you up in the street like a sudden gust of foul wind, and bring you queer infernal pictures of black slag-heaps topped with the sinister scaffold and wheels of a pit-head, of shawled, dumb women in the rain, you will also remember the miner as a cheerful creature with an appetite for pleasure. Men who work underground do not become like the naturally underground things—slow, insensitive, and heavy—but rather like the underground creatures of fancy. They have the alertness and merriment of devils and gnomes. To use the good Lancashire word, they are "wick."

I can never understand the surprise of the non-mining classes that the collier should be somewhat exotic in his tastes. . . . After swallowing dust all day and breathing bad air underground, you yourself, should your wife offer you *maigre* soup or pale porridge, would most probably throw the stuff at her and roar for the Worcester Sauce. . . . Colliers like whippet racing. . . . "Why doesn't he keep a pig?" asks the good economist when he hears of the delicate food wasted on whippets. But if the economist has a heart he knows quite well why the miner doesn't keep a stupid pig, but, instead, rejoices in the fleetness and elegance, the sheer luxury of his running dog, and in the far mysterious adventures of the homing pigeons. . . .

When the "Men Entombed" bills come out I always hear a certain cheerful passage of Handel. I heard it once in a bleak stone Lancashire street, rippling out from a cottage piano. The cottage door was wide open, there was a great rosy fire—that prime decoration of a mining town—and at the piano, probably passing the time until his bath water was ready, sat one of the "black men" of my infant terrors, stripped and ebon to his waist, and playing, precisely, jocosely, like a released lark. . . .¹

¹ Edith Shackleton, "The Black Men," in the *Evening Standard*, April 3, 1925.

VII

If the scholar and the artist and the teacher have their clear position as servants of the Kingdom, so has every other honest profession and trade. Some other trades, not reckoned as honest or honourable, have an equally clear position in the service of Antichrist. But there is a third group, popularly counted honest, which holds a curious position, in that this kind of work is apparently supposed to have no object except making money for the worker. When the great financier in a novel or a play is reproached with neglecting his wife, I notice that he never thinks of defending himself on the ground of the value to society of the work to which he has been giving his days. He only confesses, with shame or with pride, that he has yielded to the Lure of Big Business. The curious point lies not so much in the question of fact as in the public opinion represented by the playwright and the audience, who seem to accept it as natural enough that an able man should earn a great income by doing work of no value.

The question of fact, of what really is the value to society or to the universe of various kinds of work, must often of course be difficult and highly technical. The inquiry would be invited not only by the undefined Financial Operations of the play, but by the fifth draper's shop within a hundred yards, and by the twenty-fifth commercial traveller who calls there. Such special questions must be left to the economist; but we may probably agree on the general principles; firstly that in so far as our work, or any part of it, has no value in the Kingdom, so far we are living dishonestly, no matter how impeccable our legal record; and secondly that in so far as in any society such work is widespread and well paid for, the organization of the

society is open to criticism. In so far as that organization is sound, it would seem that to learn and labour truly to get our own living should involve, *ipso facto*, service to God and our neighbour.

VIII

C. The Standard of Our Private Life.

We have considered our relation to the Kingdom in general and to Truth and Beauty in particular, in so far as we are citizens, and in so far as we are professional workers. (The latter aspect will include the apparently private work of the mother and housewife, who follows the highly skilled profession of making and guiding a home.) Let us consider now that part of our lives which is free to ourselves ; which our own choice, and not public organization, must put at the service of the Kingdom. The Spirit of God in Man, seeking to fulfil itself in the millions of lives that make a nation, seeks fulfilment partly in our own. If there seems to us sometimes to be very little room except for the professional fulfilment, yet our conception of the general form of national right living involves that some leisure should exist, and what we lay down for the nation must apply to ourselves. It is right that for each of us some interest in beauty and truth, in the widest sense, should reach beyond our daily professional work, and should be deepening and widening as life goes on.

Our daily work is so important that it is right and natural for many of us to group our other interests and purposes round this central purpose of our lives. We say to ourselves when we need encouragement, " I shall not be a good mother, or a good teacher, unless I keep my mind alive " ; and this is perfectly true, because different parts of the organic whole so pro-

foundly affect one another. Nevertheless these other interests have intrinsic and not merely derived worth, since they too are part of living in the Kingdom. Our working philosophy dislikes to leave them isolated; "self-culture" perhaps does sound isolated, and therefore a little self-conscious and repellent. An English working philosophy tends to abolish isolation by grouping all purposes shyly and hurriedly under "work," "family," and "play"; and then a man brings in a good deal under the third heading by the help of the useful sub-heading "hobbies"; but for a woman our half-conscious feeling seems still to be that "work" and "family" should be enough. The freedom of woman—her freedom to serve—has still to make this last conquest in her own mind. (Alternatively, we used not to be shy about adding "religion" as a heading; and our duty to truth and beauty seemed naturally to fall, in a previous section of this essay, under our Duty to God.)

Meanwhile a woman may still encourage herself by realizing the bearing on her central work of this employment of her leisure. If her central work can be largely summed up as "making people happy," have we not often noticed that it is much easier and pleasanter to be made happy by someone who, we feel, has solid independent grounds of happiness herself? The mother who lives only for, or in, her children is apt to be felt obscurely as a burden when these reach adolescence. In grown-up life equally we need that our friend should have her own resources, and interests to sustain her beyond the interest in our self; that she should have a wide and multiple hold upon reality. In fact, for us as for the Greeks, a good man (and a good woman) must primarily be a person worth while; a valuable possession for the community, because he has positive concrete

fine qualities and fine interests besides the indispensable loyalty to duty.

IX

Apart from outward interests, we may find two special duties to Truth and Beauty respectively in our more inward daily life.

Truth in thought is not merely the grasp of superficial facts ; it is a way of thinking ; a just and profound insight.¹ This Truth is the opposite of prejudice and complex and caprice ; it is the willingness to face reality and the habit of doing so ; it is the fundamental openness to reason which makes free, not only the man himself, but those who consort with him and depend on him. Still more inwardly and inseparably, it is the veracity which makes humility ; which makes us willing to admit our mistakes to ourself or to God.

Beauty in the life of feeling seems to run closely with the duty of being as positively happy as we can. It involves the dropping, hour by hour, of needless inner frictions and fretting and worry, and the full enjoyment of the joys which life brings us. Tragedy there must be, but earnest people seem to fail less often in their tragic hours than in those which should be filled with strength and gaiety and light. We rise to greet Sorrow as a majestic guest, but too often we neglect to honour the bright-haired angels.

Look thy last on all things lovely

Every hour. Let no night

Seal thy sense in deathly slumber

Till to delight

Thou hast paid thy utmost blessing. . . .

¹ The injustice which children find bitter in their elders, and adults in their friends, generally consists not in any infliction of punishment or material harm, but simply in not understanding—not entering into our point of view. The justice we seek is to have the truth made clear.

The poet finds a poignant reason in the brevity of our contact with earthly beauty. We may find a happier one in the eternity which looks through it. "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise."

CHAPTER IV

GOODNESS AND HAPPINESS

OLIVER CHASE QUICK, M.A.

IT is a familiar thought to philosophers that all progress in the understanding of the universe consists first in taking to pieces some aspect or department of experience, and then in putting the pieces together again into some fuller and more intelligible unity. First the mind must emphasize distinctions, contrasts and oppositions, and then discover some higher and deeper harmony of the whole, in which the apparent discords are resolved.

To no problem of human thought or life does this method of procedure more clearly apply than to the ancient riddle of the relations between goodness and happiness, which is the subject of this chapter. In primitive experience, that is, in the experience of animals or of infants, before conscience has definitely asserted itself, goodness and pleasantness are the same thing. This does not, of course, imply that such a primitive consciousness as we are thinking of identifies pleasantness and goodness, so as to say to itself, as it were, that what is pleasant is good and what is good is pleasant. Clearly such an identification is possible only when the distinction between goodness and pleasantness has already been made, and in fact it is only asserted when the philosophic powers of the mind are sufficiently developed to formulate the doctrine called hedonism. But to the primitive consciousness elements

which we have learned to distinguish as pleasantness and goodness are fused together in a single and as yet indiscriminated experience. In the sensation, for instance, which may be described by the statement, "This is good to eat," goodness and pleasure are one thing, and the child or animal which has that feeling seeks for a repetition of similar experiences simply without asking its reason or motive for doing so.

But the moment the moral consciousness dawns within the mind, goodness and pleasantness begin to fall apart. A great distinction has been made. There is a good to be sought because it is good, and not because it is pleasant. With the distinction there comes a new pleasure into life, the happiness of doing good; but with it also there comes a new conflict of desires, a new sense of failure and of sin, and man's moral struggle has begun. It is indeed on the separation between goodness and pleasantness that the very meaning depends of the word "ought" whereby we express the sense of moral obligation. If we always enjoyed most what was really best, we should have no reason to ask ourselves whether we enjoyed the good because it was pleasant, or found it pleasant because it was good; we should inevitably seek what seemed good-and-pleasant for its own sake, and no question of any "ought" or obligation could arise. It is when we recognize the best as not necessarily the pleasantest, that the sense of duty begins.

And yet, if we do not enjoy most that which is really best, a "fall" of some kind there has been already. For even the very obligation, which the separation of the good from the pleasant brings into being, is witness to us that their disunion is wrong and must somehow be overcome. The beginner in music, even while Stainer still delights, feels that he ought to enjoy Bach,

because his music is really good, just as the beginner in religion acknowledges his obligation, even while he doubts his capacity, to be happy in heaven. So man cannot acquiesce in any permanent divorce between the good and the pleasant. He recognizes that that divorce, which in the world of present fact is real though never absolute, both indicates that a fundamental unity has been broken, and opens a way towards its restoration on a higher plane. Goodness and happiness must be more fully one in the end, than they were once in the beginning, of man's experience. The Humpty-Dumpty of the human spirit, even in rising to the height of his mural, that is his moral, eminence, knows that he has fallen indeed, and perhaps it will take more than all that the horses and men of King Philosophy can do to repair the fracture which he has sustained.

Certainly the horses and men have been at work for a formidable number of centuries. And, if we may ignore the simple re-identification of the good and the pleasant, which has been vainly attempted by hedonism, we may conveniently divide their efforts at reunion into two main types, each of which, though unsatisfactory by itself, seems to make some contribution towards solving the problem.

(1) The first type, for want of a better label, we may term *external*, for reasons which will appear more clearly later. It seeks to bring goodness and happiness together by making moral goodness a means to happiness as the end or result. The doctrine takes different forms, according as its adherents accept or reject certain religious beliefs as to life after death and the reality of another world. Those who reject these beliefs are unable to maintain that the moral goodness of the individual is necessarily a means to his own happiness. But they summon to their aid a doubtful interpretation

of the principle of evolution, in order to argue that the moral toils and struggles of countless generations will in the end bring into existence a state of human society upon earth, where complete happiness will reign ; and this glorious result will, they hold, justify and make worth while all the sacrifice that has been necessary to produce it. Such a theory can claim the authority of Herbert Spencer, and, in a modified form, somewhat ambiguous support from Mr. Bernard Shaw.

Believers in life after death have an easier task in vindicating an " external " solution of the problem, in so far as they are able to appeal to a principle of individual justice. Either they hold a theory of metempsychosis or transmigration of souls, which ensures that every individual according to his moral achievement or failure gets his deserts of happiness or misery ; or else they accept the doctrine of a day of divine judgment at the end of this world, when rewards and punishments will be finally distributed in the forms of everlasting bliss and everlasting pain or death.

But the basis of all " external " solutions is essentially the same. Their moral appeal is to a principle of justice by compensation, a justice, that is, which proposes to compensate the sufferings of virtue by the subsequent bestowal of an equivalent, or more than equivalent, happiness. This appeal to compensatory justice is really just as necessary and ultimate to the evolutionary theories which postulate a future age of happiness on earth, as it is to those doctrines of reward after death which give to the same principle of justice an individual, and not a purely social, application.

And, therefore, the fundamental objection is the same to all. These solutions do not really bring happiness and goodness together ; they do not make them one. It is the fatal defect of compensatory justice that in

making happiness a reward for goodness, it still regards goodness and happiness as essentially separate things.¹ And all attempts to make moral goodness a means to happiness partake of this same error, and thus become in the end both morally offensive and rationally incoherent. They are morally offensive, because the conscience of mankind is well aware that nothing can reward goodness or make it worth while except the extending and perfecting of goodness itself. They are rationally incoherent, because, whether the future age of bliss is placed in heaven or on earth, it is manifest that all the highest moral goodness (such as that manifested in self-sacrifice) must have come to an end before that age begins. Thus from a moral point of view the means are found to be of far greater intrinsic worth than the end which they were supposed to bring about.

(2) We turn now to the second type of solution, which we will call *internal* in contrast with the first. "Internal" solutions profess to find the whole end and aim of the moral activity simply within the activity itself. We are to do good simply for the sake of doing it. Our mottoes are to be the Kantian dictum that there is nothing good without qualification except the good will, and Tennyson's still more celebrated lines "Because right is right to follow right were wisdom in the scorn of consequence." If we ask, "Where does happiness come in?" we may be told (though Kant himself, at the expense of manifest inconsistency,² thought otherwise) that the only true happiness is that which actually accompanies good willing.

¹ For this particular way of stating the objection I am indebted to Dr. W. H. Moberly.

² Kant, although maintaining that the only thing good without qualification is the good will, nevertheless permitted the practical reason to postulate a providential order which in the end rewards the good will with happiness. But why is this necessary if the goodness of the good will is self-complete?

This type of solution clearly has hold of a truth which the other missed. We may cordially accept its implied assertions that moral goodness is not a mere means to an end, but an end in itself, and that no happiness ought to be regarded as an end at all save that which immediately accompanies the realization of goodness in some form.

Nevertheless, the "internal" solution, taken by itself, raises more problems than it solves and can hardly be pronounced satisfactory. The good will and right action, in order to be good and right at all, must clearly each have some aim beyond itself; and this aim must itself be good. What then is a good aim for the good will or the right action? Clearly we must not make our answer too narrow. Any aim is in principle morally right which promotes among men the realization of any goodness (not moral goodness only) and of the happiness appropriate to it; and it is no discredit to the aim, if it be very largely determined by the desire to extend any natural and healthy happiness in human life. Suppose we say that the morally good will in the individual is concerned with the service of others, that service has as its end the making possible for others a good and a happy life in a human society wherein all the diverse values, which make life truly worth living, are realized. It is clear, therefore, that the purely "internal" solution of our problem needs considerable supplementation. It is right in insisting that the only good happiness is that which inseparably accompanies the realization of goodness; but it is too narrow in finding the only absolute goodness in the initial activity of the will itself which aims at the realization of good.

We may express in two ways the supplementation which this "internal" view requires.

(1) Inasmuch as the good will must of necessity

seek an end beyond just its own activity, the consequences of that activity cannot be altogether "scorned"; there is a sense in which they are of supreme importance. The success of the good will is by no means a matter of indifference to its goodness. Good intentions are not enough, if we abstract the intentions from their realization. It follows that the morally perfect will is not merely such as to will, or whole-heartedly desire, the realization of good, but such also as to devise and carry into effect with all possible prudence and skill the means necessary for its realization. This is one element of truth in the "external" solutions already criticized. It is quite wrong to suggest that moral goodness is merely a means, or that happiness by itself is an end. But it is both true and important to affirm that the activity of the moral will must be from one point of view instrumental to the building up of a good life, the realization of which necessarily implies the fullest enjoyment of all goodness. A good will, which did not labour earnestly and plan wisely to make both better and happier the world in which it finds itself, could not be fully good at all. There is but little merit in mere quixotry.

(2) But, further, if success is of such necessary importance to the morally good will, its activity can only be justified, i.e. regarded as rationally worth while, if the universe is such as to make that success possible. Here we detect another danger latent in the "internal" point of view, which limits goodness to good willing, and another merit in the "external" point of view, which proposes to judge moral goodness simply by results. We have already dealt with the danger of the suggestion that good intentions are in themselves sufficient criterion of goodness. But the "internal" moralist, if he be also a pessimistic metaphysician, may

argue differently. The universe, he may tell us, in which human ideals of moral goodness have somehow arisen, is nevertheless as a whole inherently hostile or apathetic towards them, so that the aspiration of man to make the world better and happier than it is, is, except within very narrow limits, probably doomed to failure. Our moral heroism, therefore, must consist in the unyielding worship of an essentially unrealizable ideal of our own making, and our own will to make it as real as we can is itself the highest realization which the ideal can receive.

Now it is important to notice that such an assumption about the universe will necessarily impair the very goodness of the good will itself. For, in proportion as we believe that the good world of our moral ideals can never exist, our own moral aspirations will inevitably tend towards an unpractical and inwardly cloistered idealism, which, if not selfish in the ordinary sense, is nevertheless inherently self-centred. The greatest joy that goodness can bring will be that of knowing that beneath "the bludgeonings of chance" our heads are "bloody but unbowed." But this is not the true joy of self-sacrifice at all. This reconciliation between goodness and happiness really excludes the highest form of both. The conviction that "love is too precious to be lost, a little grain shall not be spilt," represents a morally nobler, if intellectually more difficult, faith; and by that faith we must correct the "scorn of consequence" recommended by our other Tennysonian quotation. Self-sacrifice is only rationally possible in the belief that the universe will not suffer it to be fruitless.

Now it is the supreme merit of the Christian ethic that it holds together the characteristic values, even if it does not provide a full intellectual reconciliation, of

the "internal" and the "external" points of view which we have been analysing. If we attempt to describe that ethic in a single phrase, we might say that it is an ethic of creative self-sacrifice. On the one hand, it finds the supreme moral value in self-sacrifice itself, that is, in the self-denying service of goodness ; it recognizes that the self-sacrificing will cannot be rewarded or justified by the bringing about of any results wholly external to itself, by the realization of any heaven from which its own peculiar goodness is excluded ; it is only in the self-sacrifice whereby the individual surrenders his own claim to happiness and life itself, that "heaven" is truly won. On the other hand, the Christian ethic insists that all true self-sacrifice is creative, that it has a definite end and a definite success in view, viz. the realization of a perfectly good and happy world ; and it cannot be truly creative, if the very thing which it strives and spends all to create is in the end nothing but a delusive dream.

Perhaps, then, we can best understand the kind of union between goodness and happiness at which Christianity aims, if we can take as an imperfect analogy the joy of a great artist in the moment of successful creation. That joy presupposes long and almost heart-breaking labour and self-denial in the effort to create ; and the pain of it all enters as a constituent element into the very happiness of the victory achieved at last. Moreover, in proportion as it approaches the ideal, this joy of the artist contains no sense of personal or self-applauding triumph—it is wholly centred in and derived from the goodness of the thing created, into which through toil and suffering the very soul of the artist has been poured, so that in the end it matters not to him in principle whether he created it or another ; it is enough for him that *τετέλεσται*, the thing is done.

According to the Fourth Gospel, Christ Himself expressed what is essentially the same idea under a simpler and more intimately human image. "A woman, when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born in the world." Such is the true joy of sacrifice, which cannot be taken away.

It is this same ideal of creative self-sacrifice which is the reconciliation of all the apparent self-contradictions in Christ's own ethical teaching as the synoptists record it. There are passages in which He seems to speak, from the "internal" point of view, as though good motive or desire for the good were the one thing needful. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." The publicans and the harlots are preferred to the Pharisees because they have in them that desire after goodness unattained, which is the only pledge of salvation. And the words about laying up treasure in heaven surely imply, when translated into plain prose, that to count heavenly things precious is the one necessity for eternal life. On the other hand, there are many sayings and parables (the Unjust Steward and the Talents may be taken as typical of the latter) which strike an almost startlingly prudential note. Christ's ethics have little indeed in common either with the sentimentality which would plead that good intentions may dispense with knowledge of the world, or with the romanticism which takes precarious comfort in the thought that "the gates of the future are open" and anything may happen. Even while He bids us not to be anxious about the morrow, He emphasizes the duty of counting the cost and wisely adapting means to ends. Even as He commands us to take up the Cross, He assures us that good-

ness is worth while, that great is the heavenly reward, and that not the smallest act of charity is without recompense. He promises joy and peace as certainly as He enjoins self-denial and labour.

Yet all becomes consistent, when interpreted in the light of Christ's central doctrine of dying to live as expressing the principle of creative self-sacrifice. The main difference between the ethic of the New Testament and those of the Old Testament and of later ecclesiasticism lies in this, that Christ's morality is essentially adventurous and creative; it stresses the value of giving and spending, rather than that of keeping. Even the parable of commerce and trade, so frequently on His lips, is used by Him chiefly to point the lesson that money must be given and spent and risked, if anything worth having is to be bought. It is as if He would teach us that all the goods of earthly life, including man's own earthly existence, have exchange-value only in the spiritual universe; they purchase the eternal Kingdom only by being spent to the last farthing. Even a faith, we may infer, must be traded with; it cannot be kept whole and undefiled, merely by being kept safe from criticism. And human lives must be laid out, as well as in the end laid down, if they would gain possession of that which is life and happiness indeed. That life and happiness are not separable from the fulfilment of the activity whereby lives are wholly expended. The peculiar happiness and peace, which the unselfish service of goodness always in some measure brings, are but an earnest of that joy of self-fulfilment which is fully realized only when the completion of service demands the giving up of life itself.

It is precisely the logic of this same truth which has made the resurrection of Christ the cardinal point of the New Testament. Nothing surely could be more

perverse than to represent the resurrection-narratives as a conventional "happy ending" which mars the tragedy of the Cross. The ethical import of those narratives is twofold. They assure us (1) that the complete self-sacrifice of perfect manhood is the very means of its eternal exaltation, and (2) that the exaltation is not apart or separable from the sacrifice, but is rather eternally characterized by it. This is the significance of the affirmation that the risen Christ bears for ever the marks of his passion, and of the doctrine that he lives to complete in his followers his own offering of himself.

Finally, how far does this ethic of creative self-sacrifice compel us to postulate "another world" or a life beyond death for the individual soul? We have here a vast and complex problem, of which we can barely touch the fringe.

On the one hand it seems that there must at least be some eternal background of rational order against which the scene of temporal events has to be viewed. If there be no abiding success from all the struggles of the moral will to realize a world of goodness, it is impossible to justify or make sense of the heroism of self-sacrifice. For it cannot be truly itself, if it is in fact only the assertion of a transitory human ideal in the face of an apathetic universe which inevitably quenches into nothingness the spark it has accidentally kindled. The man who gives his life a ransom for many, trusts at least that many will be ransomed by his death; and, if his faith is deluded, not only is his sacrifice void of result, but also its very goodness is in a real sense impaired inasmuch as error and not truth is found to have been its inspiration. Moreover, it is only the shallowest of thinkers who could imagine that such a faith could be justified by the arrival on earth after countless centuries of some carefully expurgated

paradise where no self-sacrifice would be demanded, and even the death of boredom would be kept at bay by stupidity. Somewhere and somehow there must be a better realization than this of life through death and joy through suffering.

On the other hand, the mere belief that the life of the human soul persists after bodily death, is by itself ethically neutral and may easily become pernicious. It has been truly remarked that it is possible to be as irreligious (and, we may add, as immoral) in a hundred lives as in one. And, whereas the thought that God has all eternity in which to perfect his creation is an often needed source of encouragement, the expectation of unending continuance in time for the human soul is fraught with moral dangers. Belief in an unending future, no less than belief in absolute annihilation, may be used to minimize the critical nature of present decisions. Or, if the critical nature of each present decision as causing endless happiness or misery is overstressed, morality becomes unhealthily self-centred, and a cautious policy of moral safety is, perhaps unconsciously, substituted for the glorious adventure of salvation. Moreover, it may well be doubted whether unending life in time could ever bring the happiness which man's spirit at its best desires. In our present imperfect state we are hampered at every point by ignorance, not only of what is possible, but also of what we really want. We have to face the fact that what is to some good men "a comfortable expectation of immortality" appears to others to be little better than a nightmare.

On the whole it seems that the winning of a heavenly kingdom and fellowship through earthly service unto death, or the purchase of a heavenly treasure by the expenditure of all that earth holds precious, are the truest, as they are certainly the most Christian, images

under which man's mind can present to itself the relation of eternity to time and of the reward to the labour of goodness. It is the merit of these metaphors that they interpret to us heaven in terms not so much of what happens or goes on happening *after* death, as of what is achieved by the completed service of which death is in some sense a necessary condition. The ethical import of such images is felt, not when we postulate a future world to reverse the injustices of the present, nor when we resign ourselves to endure wrong now in the hope of bliss to come, but rather, when in labouring and spending for the creation of a better world, we are aware already of a harmony with the ultimate order of things, and find therein joy and peace, knowing that our labour is not in vain. If, even within the narrow span of earthly life we find such satisfaction to be the fruit of that small measure of unselfish service which we render to the realization of goodness, we may reasonably argue that, in so far as the spirit of goodness possesses us, the complete expenditure of our limited stock of natural vitality does not mean simply a loss or extinction, but rather the payment of a price for something immeasurably worth having. If that which man's moral nature spends itself to create is of eternal worth, an eternal Spirit from the beginning moves his efforts: that Spirit will fulfil himself in the whole, and man, being made through his own self-expenditure one with the Divine, finds therein his own measure of eternal and creative joy. Thus in the end self-sacrifice joins again in one the goodness and the happiness which the moral consciousness has sundered. There is something after all to be said for the old-fashioned piety which is content to leave the rest to God.

CHAPTER V

GOODNESS AND JUSTICE

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THE Sermon on the Mount is received by all Christians as containing the essence of the Master's teaching on conduct, his account of the kind of behaviour he expects of his disciples. Even those who would not call themselves Christ's followers are agreed that it prescribes a new and revolutionary standard of conduct which is higher and purer than that of any other moral teacher.

But although, so long as it is only a matter of general admiration which commits them to nothing, almost all men are agreed in praising the Sermon on the Mount, when men are asked what practical effect their admiration should have on their action, there is no longer the same unanimity. On the one hand the contrast between the ideal society pictured there and the conditions which govern actual society is so striking that the Sermon on the Mount has acted as a continual challenge to men, especially to those who are at least in name followers of Christ, calling on them to try to remould society and to bring social relationships at least a little nearer its ideals. On the other hand some of the commands of Christ in it seem so hard and impossible that the attempt to put them into practice, at any rate in politics,

seems absurd. There are many men who are quite clear that whilst there may be individuals who can respond to Christ's appeal that we should be perfect, the attempt to apply such a high standard of conduct to society, its use as a pattern for legislation or social programmes, does nothing but harm. It rouses false hopes and encourages hypocrisy. If the Sermon on the Mount contains the Christian teaching on conduct, then, they maintain, Christianity has no message for society but is addressed to the individual alone.

Now it is clearly not true that Christ intended his message for the individual and not for society. The final summing up of his message in the Sermon on the Mount is that men are here and now to seek first the Kingdom of God. The Sermon was addressed to the multitude, not to a small company of saints. Christ's message is one for all men and it is one that is meant to govern their relations with one another. We can rule out from the start the idea that his teaching is one for the individual alone, that it does not set out an ideal for the relations with one another that occur in social and economic life.

At the same time if we consider some of the verses in the Sermon on the Mount, especially the last ten verses of the fifth chapter of St. Matthew, what they say is startling enough. If we consider them honestly and as if we were going to act on them, we must ask ourselves whether we really even want to do what they enjoin, or whether we even think that it would be a good thing if men were to act on them.

Of the four hard commands that are contained in the four verses 39 to 42, two of them, "Resist not evil," and "Give to him that asketh thee," seem to concern especially our relations with other individuals: the other two definitely touch upon our relations with

organized society. "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also," and "Whosoever will compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." The one says that if ever we are sued at law, we are to give way at once and yield more even than is asked of us. The other needs some explanation. The word which is translated "compel" is an out-of-the-way word which was applied in connection with the government postal service which existed in some parts of the Roman Empire. Men stationed along the postal routes paid their taxes, not in money, but in service. It was their duty to convey government messengers a specified distance from one stage on the road to another. What the text really means, therefore, is that if a duly authorized person demands a service of you in the name of the government you are to do twice what he asks of you.

If these two commands are put together and are translated into modern terms, they amount to saying that you are not to stand up for your rights, either against private persons who use the machinery of the law against you or against the government. If men dispute your rights, you are not only to give them up, you are to grant even more than is asked of you.

Does anyone really wish that these commands should be literally carried out? The administration of justice depends upon men being ready on occasion to defend their rights, even though it does not depend upon men always exacting their full rights. If good men refused ever to stand up for their rights, law, instead of being as it ought to be, a defence of the weak against the strong, would be nothing but an instrument by means of which the strong could more effectively oppress the weak. If these commands are to be obeyed literally, the work of a "poor man's lawyer," who helps others

to stand up for their rights would be wrong also. We are accustomed to look back with gratitude to the great company of those who brought our constitutional freedom into being by standing up for their rights and for the rights of other people against the government. If men had never resisted the demands of government when they thought they were oppressive, tyranny and despotism would never have been put down. The literal carrying out of these demands would mean the end of orderly government.

Was that what Christ intended? If it had been, he would have attacked law and justice and government. What he is doing is to enjoin a spirit in which these systems are to be regarded, not to lay down a new legal system. If, therefore, we treat these verses as though they were a new Decalogue, a series of commands to be interpreted legally as were the old commands, we are entirely misinterpreting their purpose, and setting before ourselves an impossible task. The conscientious objector who tries to obey verse 39 literally, will be forced to disobey verse 41. For his insistence on "resisting not evil" will make him resist even the legal demands of the State. Christ is not in the Sermon on the Mount preaching a new legalism, but a new attitude towards all law and all standardized relations with our fellow-men. What the spirit is which is inculcated there, it is not hard to see. We are never to exact full justice for ourselves, but are to be ready to give more than full justice to others. We are never to let any self-seeking appear in our demand for justice. We are to be ready for the love of our fellow men to give way even when we are in the right, and we are not always to stand on our just rights. This does not mean that we are never to ask for justice or to see that our fellow men get it. Justice and all the machinery necessary to maintain it

are not condemned. But we are to remember that justice is not and cannot be everything. No rules enforceable by law, however just, no system of rights, however ideal, will ever make an ideal society, unless men are prepared to take on occasion less than the rule allows them, to abate something of their just rights and to supplement justice with love and forbearance.

Goodness and justice then are not the same. Conduct that can be formulated in rules and enforced either by law or by public opinion can never be the whole of the conduct incumbent upon us as followers of Christ.

This distinction between justice and goodness is of far-reaching importance. The distinction has not always been recognized because the internal nature of goodness and its dependence on moral freedom have not always been recognized. It is the inevitable outcome of regarding goodness as primarily something internal, and if accepted it must modify our conception both of goodness and of justice.

It is often said that the Greeks combined ethics and politics more closely than we do. They did so because they thought of the State as capable of producing directly the good life of its citizens.

Justice, as Aristotle in his discussion of it notices, has always had a close connection with what is prescribed by law. But the Greeks saw that existing law is very often imperfect and actually unjust and they contrasted such existing law with the law of an ideal State or with an ideal code of law. Justice for Plato is attainable only in a state whose rulers have an insight into the nature of the good, the true purpose of human existence, and so arrange the relations of the members of the State to one another that each contributes to that purpose as his nature fits him. A single perfect vision of goodness is to inspire all the life of the community, but only a few

are to have the vision. Most men are to have their goodness made for them by the rulers who are to be "the craftsmen of the city's virtue," and for most men therefore in this ideal State justice and goodness are to be the same. For there can be nothing higher than to follow a pattern of conduct inspired by perfect vision, and laws and social custom and education and all social relations are to be the expression and practical working out of that vision. In such a city, though there is justice, there are no rights. There are only the various actions which are right for each man in his station. Though Plato taught that true virtue was within the soul and that external actions were right only as they were the expression of that internal virtue, he yet held that for most men that internal virtue could only find expression in external act in so far as they accepted the guidance of authority. The wisdom of others would give them a complete code of action, and in acting as these dictated they would be at once completely just and good, or at least as just and good as it was in them to be.

Christ's command "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," was addressed to all his followers and on each member of the Kingdom of God is laid the duty of ascertaining what is the will of God for him. He must indeed in that task use such aids as there are; he will not lightly, if he is wise, neglect the authority of social experience, of custom and of law and of those who are wiser and better than himself. But the responsibility is his and he cannot evade it. For it is his duty above all to listen to the voice of God in his own heart. There are not two standards of morality, the one binding on all men, the other only on the saint. There is a common standard of mutual action, demanded by justice and enforceable

by public opinion, or by law, and we are each of us called to go beyond that in the specific way in which our powers and opportunities—our vocation—demand.

Substitute for a community ruled by the infallible wisdom of a few a community where all are to learn as well as to obey the will of God, and the relations of justice and goodness at once alter. For there men will recognize that insight into the possibilities and demands of goodness is not attained by the wise man once for all, but is something much more complex and growing and alive, coming in all sorts of ways to all sorts of men, the spirit blowing where it listeth. The aim of organization in such a society can no longer be to impose upon all its members an elaborate code of conduct, a standard pattern of the good life, but rather to give room and scope for its members to lead the good life. Law and justice will now have for their purpose the maintenance of a system of rights, not the laying down for everyone what is right, not the enforcing of the good life, but the providing of opportunities for and the removing of hindrances to it.

We are sometimes apt to think that Christianity has made little or no impression on the State. There is so much to be done that what has been accomplished seems infinitesimal. But the fact that the modern democratic State explicitly declares its aim to be the maintenance of a system of rights, that it makes liberty the end of law, is the direct result of the great emphasis which the Reformation laid on the doctrine, always held in some form or other by the Christian Church, of the right of private moral judgment. No one did so much to win the victory of the principles which inspire the modern democratic State as the small Protestant bodies like the Independents, the Quakers and the Anabaptists who preached, sometimes with undue

emphasis, the doctrine of the inner light or of the spiritual priesthood of all believers. If we are serious in our rejection of the morality of legal observance and really believe that compulsory goodness is not true goodness, we must accept certain limitations to the power of organized action which rests on legal observance. We are all of us so much impressed from time to time with the imperfections of our social organization and its failure to provide adequate opportunities for many of its members to lead the good life, that we often lay the blame of the failures and crimes of individuals on "the system" or on "society," and think that there must be some proper form of social organization, if only we could discover it, which would make all such failures and crimes impossible. That our present social organization is very imperfect, that it weighs with terrible unevenness on certain sections of the community and that society in some sense manufactures criminals and social failures none can deny. The obligation which such facts lay upon us to make our social organization less imperfect is obvious. But we have also to remember that any system, however perfect in itself, is bound to depend for its effect on whether it is worked well or ill by individuals. Society organized in the best possible way would modify the defects of society as it now exists by making easy what it now makes difficult, by helping what it now hinders, by giving opportunities which it now denies. But the help would have to be used and the opportunities would not really be such unless they could be misused as well as used. The spirit as well as the organization of help would have to be present and true opportunities cannot be so contrived that they cannot be misused as well as used, if the spirit of wisdom and understanding is lacking in the users. No system of law and justice

will work unless most people are prepared to be better than the system. It is mere folly to think of a system or organization which should reflect the mind of Christ imposed on individuals who are not ready for and will not work such a system. For, as we have seen, Christ's teaching is a warning against the sufficiency of systems.

The essence of the distinction between a system of rights and a system of right is that in the former the end of law is liberty. Law can be an instrument of liberty because there can be no real freedom of action without some power of planning ahead and therefore without some kind of security about the conditions in which our action is to take place. Rights properly understood and used are liberties. They guarantee those who enjoy them against interference so long as their action takes place within the limits the law lays down. They always involve duties, for all members of society have laid upon them the obligation of respecting the rights of others. From such a general obligation spring the duties which others may claim of us. But the fulfilment of such duties can never be the whole of our moral obligation, for the whole point of their existence is to leave room for each one of us to lead the good life, and that life, as we saw it in Chapter III, will be social as well as creative, will involve all kinds of duties to others.

This doctrine of Christian liberty, the doctrine of the moral responsibility of the individual with its corollary that the aim of law is to foster and find room for that responsibility, may appear to have anarchical consequences. "Speaking of the inward light, to which some methodists pretended," Dr. Johnson said, "it was a principle utterly incompatible with social or civil security." Men sometimes take strange notions of the will of God. There is a characteristically sardonic

passage in Hobbes where he is dealing with those of his contemporaries who claimed the direct authority of God for their actions, which he sums up by saying, "So that though God Almighty may speak to a man by dreams, visions, voice and inspirations; yet he obliges no man to believe he had done so to him that pretends it, who (being a man) may err, and (which is more) may lie." But the Christian belief that it is the duty of every man to learn what is the will of God for him is supplemented by the belief that men can only come to know the will of God by loving their fellow men. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? He that loveth his brother abideth in the light." The alternative to unity achieved by obedience, to a rule imposed from without, is not a collection of isolated individuals pursuing entirely unrelated purposes, but a real society where the spirit of fellowship, the sense of mutual obligation, of belonging together, of caring for one another informs in some degree the wills and purposes of its members, and where this common bond is yet compatible with a rich individual variety, initiative and spontaneity of life. How weak such a sense of common fellowship is in our modern great societies we are all painfully aware; but weak and imperfect as it is, it is the corner-stone of all social relationships and the basis from which mutual obligations are deduced.

A modern society then has neither the elaborate code of law enforcing moral conduct which is characteristic of many earlier societies, nor the standard furnished by a complete vision of the good achieved by the insight of the philosopher, which was Plato's ideal; but it has nevertheless a standard of the good life, much more complex and less clearly formulated, rather a common ethic than a code or a set of explicit principles,

but a standard which can nevertheless be seen to inspire men's attitude to law, their demands on what the State ought to do, the kind of life which they think the State ought to make possible for its members. That standard is not something fixed; it is continually changing, and we have all a double duty towards it. It is our duty as individuals to do all that in us lies by personal example and in other ways to make it more perfect and more ideal; but when we are as citizens taking part in bringing about legislation we must recognize the standard as it exists for the majority and as it is accepted by them and make that the basis of our law-making. For it is only the standard which is widely and naturally accepted which can be the source of effective rights or fruitful State action. Yet all the time alongside of legislation based upon accepted standards, there is taking place a general modification and improvement of standards which in time make possible a change in the system of effective right. A study of English legislation in the nineteenth century, for example, bears evident witness of the way in which law reflects changes in the general moral outlook of a nation. For justice, just because it is concerned with a system of mutual rights, always implies a social standard—the acceptance of a common purpose of society in relation to which functions, obligations and privileges are allotted to members of the community in accordance with their different capacities and talents.

The principle of justice is in one sense the great conserving force of society; in another sense it has been a great revolutionary force. For justice has always in it the double aspect of a demand for equality and of the impartial application of a rule. The equality it demands is not an abstract equality. It implies a common purpose and differing capacities or willing-

ness to serve the common purpose and the impartial use of those differences as the common purpose demands. Our powers of serving society are different, and to give us all the same tasks in the name of equality would be unjust. What justice demands is that the principle which determines our function in society should be impartially applied. But the demand for justice will be unsatisfied if that principle so applied does not make us all in a real sense equal as members of society.

Justice as the impartial application of a rule or principle is the great conserving force of society. It takes the common standard and the good life for granted, and seeks to apply rules inspired by that standard to the mutual relations of all members of society. But just because it thus takes the standard for granted, it allows the imperfections of the standard to be reflected in its application, and such justice is always imperfect. There has always been a natural conflict between the administrator and the lawyer on the one hand and the moral reformer or the prophet on the other, a conflict which has manifested itself as much in the history of the Church as in the history of civil society. The man whose business it is to keep the machine running, to devote himself to the immensely complicated task of applying an accepted moral standard to the detailed relations of members of society to one another, has often little patience with the idealist whose whole force goes into the criticism of the assumptions on which the administrator is working. The idealist has as little for him who works unquestioningly and as if it never would change a system in which the idealist sees the immaturity and the potentiality for growth. Yet the good administrator or lawyer and the impassioned idealist or prophet or moral experimenter, however hard each may find it to appreciate the other, are clearly

both essential to society. While the lawyer, the administrator and the statesman are those to whom we must always turn to help us in

That most difficult of tasks—to keep
Heights which the soul is competent to gain,

without the preaching of the idealist and the prophet there would be no heights to keep.

The primary demand of the idealist is that the working of the administrator should be informed by a truer insight into the possibilities of the good life, but he may and often does express his demand as a demand for justice. Justice can only express itself in laws and rules, and yet laws and rules, and not only their application, may be unjust. For the equality which justice seeks is more than the impartial application of an accepted rule. It is equal membership of society. The root principle of justice has perhaps been best expressed in Kant's well-known statement, that we should "treat humanity in our own person and in that of others, never merely as a means, but always as an end also." The demand persists in spite of all the patent differences between men because of a conviction that men's equality as moral beings or as children of one Father is of such infinitely greater importance than their diversities of gifts that, compared to it, their diversities do not count. Because existing societies are founded on an imperfect conception of Christian brotherhood, they pursue ends in which all members of society cannot share and which are therefore incompatible with true justice. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among^u you, let him be your minister

and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

This demand for an ideal justice, which should ensure the equality of all as members of society, has been a great revolutionary force in history. The revolutionary movement of the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, which culminated in the French Revolution, and brought about democracy, was inspired with a passion for political justice, and it succeeded when it convinced the ordinary man that a political system which was based on inequality, which assumed that some men are just born to command and others just born to obey, was essentially unjust. The working-class movement which succeeded it was inspired by a demand for economic justice.

These demands for abstract justice are often in themselves impossible demands. They demand the equal sharing of something which from its very nature cannot be equally shared. But their impracticability is a criticism of the standards of the societies in which the demands are made, societies which make their end political or economic power which can benefit only a few while it is brought about at the expense of all. The demand for abstract justice, that whatever society sets most value on should be shared equally by all, is thus a touchstone of the standard of the good life which existing society has set for itself. It is in its essence a demand that society should put first the things in which men can share and not the things in which they compete. The Sermon on the Mount seems to be concerned with goodness rather than with justice, because there can be no true justice apart from true goodness, apart from a true conception of the things in life that really matter. "Seek ye first the justice and the Kingdom of God" is an indictment of a political system

in which, from a forgetfulness of men as ends, of men as children of one father, the interests of the few are given preference to the common interests of all. It is not an indictment of law as such or of system as such. It is an inspired belief as to the way in which on the level of what law and system can offer, we shall in the end obtain the best results. This way is open to us if we keep in mind, whilst dealing with the real inequalities and differences of men, the significance of their equality and sameness that moved Christ when he told us to be "the children of our Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," and that is the supreme message of Christ to the forsaken and the outcast.

CHAPTER VI

CONFLICTING STANDARDS AND MORAL PROGRESS

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IN the foregoing chapters we have again and again been confronted by conflicting standards and ideals in the moral world, and so we are led to ask whether there can be any absolute ethic. So stated, the question has an academic, and perhaps even a forbidding, sound. Yet in reality it touches closely some of the most pressing problems of our day. Is there any common ground on which the moral judgments of mankind in different centuries and civilizations may be seen to rest? Is there a main stream in the world's moral history, or do we lose ourselves amid shifting sands, which change their position with every change in climate or industry, in density of population or control over natural forces? In a word, are the judgments regarding conduct, which from time to time gain acceptance as ethical truth, the changing products of outward circumstance or the abiding guide of life? This question—in whatever form we may express it—is not remote and unpractical, but bears directly both on our daily practice and on our estimate of Christianity in its relation to other forms of religious or moral belief.

I

One of the most famous sayings of the ancient world was that of Protagoras, an older contemporary of

Socrates, that "Man is the measure of all things." If this is interpreted to mean that in every moral question the human factor—man's constitution and his bodily and spiritual needs—must be the determining one, the statement may seem almost self-evident. But it has often been understood otherwise, as claiming that for each man or group of men the impressions and impulses of the moment—the immediate felt need, as contrasted with the more remote and rational good—is the criterion of truth. We may, according to this view, attain to the knowledge of what is true *for us*, but hardly to a truth, either in the intellectual or the moral sphere, which holds at all times and for all men. This is a theory which has strong attractions for the mind of to-day. It harmonizes with the doctrine of relativity which dominates other spheres of thought. It enables us to do justice to that variety of customs and standards which anthropology and history bring to our view, while it saves us from the toil of seeking to find a connecting thread running through the maze. It is on the surface less open to intellectual criticism than the opposite view; and we are always apt to be influenced in our judgment in favour of a doctrine which promises to be morally accommodating as well.

This point of view was clearly expressed by David Hume, who was one of the first to apply the historical method to ethical problems, in his essay on "The Sceptic." After speaking of the resemblance between many of the moral and æsthetic judgments of mankind, he proceeded: "This uniformity among human kind hinders not, but that there is a considerable diversity in the sentiments of beauty and worth, and that education, custom, prejudice, caprice, and humour, frequently vary our taste of this kind. . . . If you be wise . . . you will confess that beauty and worth are merely of a

relative nature, and consist in an agreeable sentiment, produced by an object in a particular mind, according to the peculiar structure and constitution of that mind." If Hume had been confronted by such idealist theories as Plato's, that the Good is unchanging in its nature to those who apprehend it aright, or Kant's, that the imperative of conscience has sovereign authority for all rational beings whatever their time or circumstance, he would have been ready with a reply which we find somewhat later in the same essay, "Good and ill, both natural and moral, are entirely relative to human sentiment and affection."

In facing this problem, whether truth and right are indeed true and authoritative only for ourselves, or whether in the act of judging we are carried forward to some higher and more permanent ideal, some of us acknowledge that we are under a lifelong debt to the idealist theory of the Good and of Duty, which finds various expression in the great Greek thinkers and in Kant. But at the present time, as we have just seen, the problem emerges in a historical setting. More than this, Christianity is a historical religion. So on both grounds it seems appropriate to approach our question from the side of moral fact rather than of ethical theory. However imperfect our survey must needs be, it may well lead by this indirect road to the conclusion that changing moral standards are not inconsistent with true progress towards a final goal.

II

When we look backward over the record of human society, we see that its pastoral, agricultural, feudal and industrial stages have each produced their own special virtues ; while at each period certain defects have been

branded with deep disapproval as threatening the very foundations of the social order. Courage and hospitality at one period, loyalty and obedience at another, and yet again industry, initiative and enterprise, have been among the virtues specially exalted. Pity for the weak and suffering, according to the naturalistic student of morals, is a quality reprobated in certain conditions of society and praised in others; but in his view it is the pressure of economic or political circumstance, rather than any moral consideration of universal application, which decides whether the balance is to fall on the side of condemnation or of approval. And if we follow these general considerations out, as the study of human origins enables us increasingly to do, into the detail of laws and customs affecting the family, or war and peace, or the propitiation of unseen powers, the impression is strengthened that moral judgments form a maze without a clue. Nor was it an altogether new pursuit even in Hume's time to set in picturesque contrast the strangely varying manners and ethical standards of various races. Herodotus did it with enthusiasm twenty-four centuries ago; and his modern followers, while they condemn his uncritical methods, may pay their tribute to his catholicity of interest as a chronicler. They will, indeed, hardly seek to rival the peculiarly grim gusto with which he tells, in the concluding sentences of his First Book, that among the Massagetæ those who reach a hale old age are solemnly killed and feasted upon by their nearest of kin—"which is considered by them the happiest lot."

But we may stop short of the consideration of such freaks and aberrations of morality—real or imagined—and yet find abundant proof that there is no universal and unchanging ethic in the sense of a detailed moral code accepted by all. Yet, when we take a wide view,

we see certain principles which have become more and more clear amid the conflict of judgments, and certain elements in the moral ideal which have gained at the least a very general assent and admiration among the more advanced races. It cannot reasonably be said that the field we are contemplating is a mere chaos when those bred in different traditions join in admiration for the same historic or ideal characters, and agree in large measure as to the great duties and obligations of life. It would, for example, be very widely agreed that the good man shows both truthfulness and mercy or pity ; although at the point of intersection between these virtues the question which should be considered as more fundamental may receive opposite answers. Thus an argument has been heard between an Indian and an Englishman as to the relative importance of strict truthfulness and of pity in giving evidence before a Court of Law, in which it was apparent that the primacy of truthfulness seemed self-evident to the Englishman but by no means to the Indian.

Such differences of emphasis cannot be minimized, yet it is something that there is a common recognition of the nature of the main virtues, if not always of the order in which they should be put into practice. Further, the impulses towards the noble or the base which form the raw material of morality are far more constant than the conduct to which they give rise under the moulding influence of social example and control : the actions of Hector or King David are far removed from ours, but we recognize at once the greatness of their humanity. The poets, and those historians who have some share of the poetic insight, enable us to see how much there is to link the virtue of the world's noblest men in a kinship that transcends the centuries.

In our present, perhaps more prosaic, inquiry we may

at the outset note a quite definite progress along two great lines of moral judgment. However differently the detailed standards of conduct may be understood, it is clear that they are applied over a wider field, and understood in a more inward and a more searching way, than at earlier periods of man's history. The former change has been made familiar to English-speaking students during more than forty years by the masterly section on "The Extension of the Area of Common Good," in T. H. Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*.¹ Green argues that the great distinction between classical ethics and modern ethics as moulded by Christianity is to be found less in the qualities commended or actions enjoined than in the wider area over which in Christian ethics the obligation of humanity is felt to be binding. "It is not," he says, "the sense of duty to a neighbour, but the practical answer to the question, Who is my neighbour? that has varied" (par. 207). Whether or not his contention be accepted in full, we can hardly fail to recognize a definite progress in the widening of the ethical field of vision by successive stages from the family to the clan or tribe, then to the city-state, later to the federal or national state, or to the church which includes men of various nations, and finally to the human race. It is a progress in moral vision, even if it be attained with great and increasing difficulties in its practical working out, difficulties due to tension and conflict between the narrower and the wider obligations, which will be discussed in the next two chapters.

In our own day the growing interdependence of distant races, made possible by the swift developments of applied science, has run ahead of the slower operations of the moral consciousness of mankind, and new points of contact between the peoples have too often become new

¹ Book III, ch. iii ; cf. ch. ii. and pars. 240 ff.

danger-points ; yet this headlong process, so impossible to arrest and so hard to control, does but enforce in a rude and urgent way the teaching of Stoic moralists and Christian preachers that there is no point in the moral world at which we can say, 'Thus far and no further.' The Greek or Roman citizen could refuse to own any degree of moral kinship with slave or barbarian, but the logic of history in the modern world confirms the ideal teaching of philosophy and religion that, in the last resort, there is but one "Great Society," and that no section of our race can be morally isolated or neglected without loss and danger to all. It is, of course, true that those nearer to us in place, kinship or occupation have a more constant, and even in a sense a more binding, claim on our service than those widely separated from us ; yet they also are our neighbours as often as our lives come into relation, and they need our help. The adjustment of these claims and duties, and the apportionment of our time and our gifts between those near at hand—the men and women with whom we are in immediate contact—and those far off, whom we can only help indirectly and, as it were, in the mass, must increasingly demand in the future the deepest insight and the most constant thought. No precise solution is possible when the problem varies from man to man and almost from day to day ; yet we may say with assurance that a life in which either class of duty is wholly neglected falls short of the Christian ideal.

Thus the sense of moral obligation widens ; nor can any man be considered truly good until he has entered into the experience of St. Paul, who, strict Jew as he originally was, came to recognize that he owed a debt of service "both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish." But at the same time the conception of obligation becomes deeper and

more inward. The "extension of the area of common good" has as its complement an intensive process. Indeed, the two are vitally related, as also appears in the history of St. Paul; for his writings show clearly that it was just in the measure in which he saw the life of goodness as something inward, and broke away from all that was external and legal in his early training, that he reached the thought of a universal Christian brotherhood. One who has penetrated beneath the surface of life with its anarchic variety of laws and customs to the deeper levels of humanity, and who has found there a new experience of remorse and liberation, of joy and of power, naturally sees all other men as, potentially at least, sharers of his discovery, and thus in a true sense his brethren.

With this goes the thought that nobility of character and outstanding virtue are only in a minor degree—the Stoics said, not at all—dependent on favouring circumstances. This, again, is no new discovery, but a truth proclaimed by the greatest of philosophers and religious teachers during two thousand years. In the service both of man and of God the outward value of the gift is seen to be insignificant in comparison with the devotion which provides it. So Aristotle says that liberality consists not in the value of the money given, but in the moral state of the giver.¹ Or in the religious sphere we may quote Krishna's saying in the *Bhagavad Gita*, "If one of earnest spirit set before me with devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit, or water, I enjoy this offering of devotion";² and parallel sayings from the Gospels, such as those regarding the widow's offering or the "cup of cold water," spring readily to the mind. But if all service be akin to giving, this takes us straight to the exaltation

¹ *Nic. Eth.*, iv. 2, cf. 2 Cor. viii. 12.

² ix, 26 (tr. L. D. Barnett, Temple Classics, p. 129).

of inward motive as the determining mark of goodness. Not the outward, measurable effect achieved, but the purity and unselfishness of intention, becomes the test of moral value; and this appreciation of the supreme importance of the good motive, without which even an externally good action is worthless, lies at the very centre of the teaching of the New Testament.

Thus along these two all-important lines we find a distinct development. The good man lives in an ever wider world as he recognizes the value of the individual, whatever his class or colour, and strives to help him towards a fuller and more satisfying life. At the same time he realizes that goodness must be appraised less and less by external tests and more by inner purity of motive. Or, if it be said that these criteria err by being too formal, we may say more concretely that, amid all the undeniably wide divergences of judgment which meet us regarding particular duties, there is one constant characteristic in the history of ethical thought. The ideal from first to last is that every man should look to a more distant goal than that of present enjoyment, and to a wider end than that of personal advantage. Thus as tribal and conventional morality passes into something wider and more spiritual, loyalty to the group becomes loyalty to an ideal, but the principle of self-identification with a larger good remains. Loyalty and self-devotion are qualities whose content may become clearer and whose range may widen as centuries pass, but in their ultimate basis they do not change. There never was—there never will be—a time when the good man can forget that he is indissolubly bound to a community apart from which his life cannot attain its true end. "You yourself," the wise emperor of Rome reminded himself, "are a part of a social system necessary to complete the whole. Accordingly let your every action

be a similar part of the social life." And again, "Find your sole delight and recreation in proceeding from one unselfish action to another, with God ever in mind."¹

When Jesus pointed out the central and ruling principles of the good life, he did so in words which harmonize with these, but are simpler and more direct, and deal first with a state of the soul and only in the second place with outward action. "He that loveth his life shall lose it. . . . Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind—this is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." St. Paul sounded the same note when he spoke of love as the fulfilling of the law, and as the one abiding and absolutely valuable thing in a world of changing values. So also modern interpreters of Christian thought have sought to find fresh expression for the New Testament principle when they have exalted the Good Will, the precept, "Die to live," or the ideal of self-identification with a wider good than the immediate good of the individual.

III

So far we have sought to trace underlying resemblances in different forms of ethical thought. If we were to follow out this inquiry, we should find further points of contact—notably a common emphasis on the discipline of natural impulse in order that the higher qualities of mind and spirit may come into play. "Let him who knows that his body is brittle as a potsherd, make his mind strong as a fortress." "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee." "The leading principle in man's nature is the social spirit: and the

¹ *Meditations of Marcus Aurelius* (tr. G. W. Chrystal), ix. 23, vi. 7.

second is victory over the solicitations of the body.”¹ Yet these and other resemblances which might be pointed out ought not to blind us to certain great and hitherto unresolved differences. We have seen certain striking common principles or tendencies which have grown clearer as ethical reflection has become more mature ; but we cannot yet say that all the chief currents of moral thought will ever unite in a common stream. Rather, to hold this is an act of faith ; for we can still distinguish at least four divergent types of ethic at work in the world—those of Self-assertion, of legal Observance, of Renunciation, and of active Love. But we have to live our lives in the present : we cannot wait to see how or how far these contending theories may be reconciled centuries hence. So we must make our choice here and now ; seeking, in Plato’s metaphor, that word of God which may most securely carry us on our life’s voyage.

But, while we must choose definitely by which type of ethical thought we mean to test and to direct our lives, we ought at the same time to recognize that all have their roots deep in the common ground of human nature. All of these represent ways in which men have sought to reach a satisfying end of life, escaping from the narrowness of their early, undisciplined experience. One way of thus transforming life appeals more strongly to one individual, and another to another. In one form of society, or at one stage of development, one theory may be dominant ; and, when conditions change, another may tend to take its place. But even those types of ethical thought which we see to be imperfect and one-sided answer to definite needs in our many-sided and much-aspiring human nature.

The first two types need not detain us long. For the

¹ *The Buddha’s Way of Virtue*, ch. iii ; Matt. v. 29 ; *Marcus Aurelius*, vii. 55.

Ethic of Self-assertion cannot be worked out to its conclusion, as Plato showed long ago. In the hands of a writer like Nietzsche—three parts poet and revolutionary and one part philosopher—it may have value as a protest against conventionalism and enfeebling sentiment. Politically it may have some measure of justification when it points out the danger of suppressing the man of exceptional talent or independence. But it can never be the basis of an enduring society. Carried out to the end, it must produce an anarchy of competing wills and claims ; whereas what our world most urgently demands from ethics and religion is a larger spirit of unity.

If the Ethic of Self-assertion seeks to turn back the stream of moral progress, that of legal Observance tries so to canalize it that its creative freedom and beauty are lost. It surrenders the attempt to renew men's motives, or seeks to do so by first reforming their actions—claiming with much plausibility that the latter is a more hopeful way to a better world. For it is indeed true that the disciplined adherence to lines of conduct which have been found to be socially beneficial through the long experience of the centuries has great value as a steadying influence in human affairs. Law and the observance of law, as both the Greeks and the Hebrews perceived, save the gains of the past from being squandered ; while, to the deeper thinkers like St. Paul, the discipline of law has a positive and forward-pointing function when it serves as the child's guide (*paidagogos*, Gal. iii. 24) towards a higher devotion and a larger liberty. But too often this stage is not reached. The discipline of authority becomes a settled substitute for the self-discipline—often most effective when it is least conscious—of a nature penetrated by love for all noble things, and by the desire to share the highest experience

with others. So the Ethic of Observance should perhaps be considered as an arrested type—or as a stage on the road to freedom, a “moment” in its realization—rather than as one of the fundamental forms of moral thought.

The Ethic of Renunciation has had so deep and widespread an influence that it would require fuller discussion if the scope of this paper allowed. It has been dominant in India, and has at different periods swayed both the counsels of moralists in the West and the practice of the Christian Church. Stoicism on one important side of its doctrine, Neo-Platonism, monasticism, quietism, have all taught in their different dialects that the way of salvation is essentially a way of escape; and both in the East and in the West the doctrine of renunciation has borne fruit in lives of singular elevation, disinterestedness and calm. But this has been done at a heavy cost. “From affection,” says the Buddhist scripture already quoted, “come grief and fear. He who is without affection knows neither grief nor fear.” Hinduism, too, strikes the same note, even in the *Bhagavad Gita* (xii. 18), where the ideal character is described as “indifferent to foe and to friend, indifferent in honour and in dishonour, in heat and in cold, in joy and in pain, free of attachment.” In thought of this order, the social element either disappears in a withdrawal of the spirit into solitary communion with a God who dwells apart; or it remains an obligation of service, lying on the path towards, but not essentially related to, the spirit’s true goal of liberation and release.

Over against each of these conceptions of the moral end Christianity holds up an ideal of a different order. Against the Ethic of Self-assertion it sets the plain facts of experience that only when the self of our primitive and undisciplined nature has been checked, disciplined and even “denied,” can we “find ourselves” in the

wider life of service to God and man. In face of the Ethic of Observance it unflinchingly proclaims the inwardness of any true and high development of character, holding forth the ideal, not of conformity to a rule imposed from without, but of the free expression of a spiritual impulse which must find an outlet in service. But service at its best must be freely rendered ; and the high end of righteousness can only be achieved by those " who walk not after the flesh "—not, according to a code of law enforced by rewards and punishments—" but after the spirit."

As against the Ethic of Renunciation Christianity proclaims that of active Love. Renunciation does not disappear : but, as has been shown in Chapter V, its place is subsidiary. It is a means to freedom. In this case the choice between two ethical ideas depends on our whole view of the world as it enters into our experience. If existence itself is a burden, if the body is but the prison or tomb of the soul, if every attempt to transfuse the opaque medium of a selfishly striving and hopeless humanity with the light of altruism and of hope is doomed from the outset to failure, then renunciation, withdrawal, an other-worldly outlook, represent the highest wisdom. But if there is " a soul of good in things evil," not hopelessly imprisoned but able to become dominant and free, the Christian thought of the Kingdom of God as existing, indeed, " in heaven " but increasingly to be realized " on earth," becomes credible because it is founded on the Will of God.

It may, however, be suggested that this is mere unreasoning optimism, since we all know that there are optimists by instinct, just as there are pessimists by profession ; and the cynic may say that there is little good in arguing with either. But there are several lines of argument which shew that the adoption of the moral

ideal held forth by Christianity depends on factors more stable than temperament or caprice. It rests on what has been called a "rational faith-venture." The element of venture must always be a personal one, a step in advance of clear knowledge, by which a man risks first his own destiny, and then his hopes for the world, on a truth that satisfies his own quest or on a personality that draws forth his trust and devotion. His venture can only be justified by its success; and on the plane of history the verification of his faith can only come when he is no longer here to perceive it. For the world-contest between the different ideals named above must take centuries to decide. But if it is already apparent that the Christian ethic when looked on in its completest form finds a place for the really vital elements in rival systems, then it is at least possible that it will in the end be recognized as absolute.

Let us test this possibility as briefly as may be. The element of permanent value in the glorification of the strong uncontrolled man as the ethical ideal lies in the perception that the human spirit can only reach its full stature in a life of freedom. Constraint cannot be the master-principle in morality. At the opposite extreme the defenders of ritual or legal observance point to the urgent necessity of binding society together by the strong ties of social custom and respect for the rights of others, even though this involve the curbing of many natural impulses and desires. But it is obvious that in these systems we have two complementary aspects of the truth, either of which is defective if it be taken as sufficient in itself; for one leads to anarchy and the trampling down of the weak, while the other fails to give scope to certain of the most essential qualities of human nature at its best—the sense of responsibility, moral initiative, and free allegiance to that which appeals to a man's own

heart and conscience as the highest which he knows. But in the ideals of Christian freedom as attained through self-surrender, of service as itself an adventure (cf. Chapter II above), and of the glad acceptance of obligations to the necessitous and the weak, both elements fall into place.

Nor need this emphasis on freedom and personal obligation involve any neglect of the strong allies which morality finds in custom and tradition, or any disparagement of the slowly acquired wisdom which they embody. But tradition, even the best of traditions, must not be slavishly followed, "lest one good custom should corrupt the world." It must be sympathetically, even reverently, examined; yet tradition can only be used to the greatest advantage when it is assimilated anew by the men of each succeeding age, and fearlessly applied to the problems of their own time. There is a place in Christian conduct for the temper that seeks to conserve the gains of the past—that of the good parent or citizen who carries on loyally the daily tasks of the community; and the value that we justly set upon these is the measure of the truth underlying the Ethic of Observance. But there is also a place for the ethical pioneer—and here we find the truth which the Ethic of Self-assertion exaggerates and perverts. There is a place for the prophet who has seen a vision of possible achievement higher than has been imagined by the conventional moralists of his time, and for his practical brother, who courageously strikes out new forms of service or of moral enterprise; and the creative personalities of the Christian religion have belonged to this morally original and adventurous type. No more stinging reproach can justly be directed against the Church than that it has so often allowed its conscientious but fatally unenterprising average member to turn an ethic of adventure resting upon

faith into an ethic of timid propriety resting upon use and wont.

This has perhaps been somewhat of a digression, but its object was to reinforce from another angle the conclusion of the preceding chapter that Christianity finds room both for enterprise, individuality and freedom, and for the faithful pursuit of common tasks, in its ideal of character. That it calls for the spirit of renunciation also needs little argument; though when it has been true to the spirit of its Founder, renunciation has never been its last word. The last word has been "life more abundant," a life rich and ever growing, whether on its contemplative or its active side. Thus if Christianity embraces within itself the truths for which other forms of faith have especially stood, that in itself gives a solid presumption that it is not destined to pass into some new and higher creed, however far it may itself be enriched and developed in the future.

IV

It may be still objected that, while these considerations may prove satisfying to our own minds, we have no right to claim that they are valid for men and women brought up in another clime, who owe allegiance to different traditions. Thus the doctrine of moral relativity meets us once more. It is, indeed, expressed in the last work of Professor Ernst Troeltsch, perhaps the most learned theologian of our day, who gave close thought for many years to the question in what sense Christianity can claim absolute truth and finality. Writing of the claim that Christianity is "a manifestation of the Divine Life," he says, "The evidence we have for this remains essentially the same, whatever may be our theory concerning absolute validity—it is the evidence of a profound inner experience.

This experience is undoubtedly the criterion of its validity, but, be it noted, only of its validity *for us*. It is God's countenance as revealed to us; it is the way in which, being what we are, we receive, and react to, the revelation of God. It is binding upon us, and it brings us deliverance. . . . But among the great spiritual religions themselves the fundamental spiritual positions which destiny has assigned to them persist in their distinctness. . . . There can be no conversion or transformation of one into the other, but only a measure of agreement and mutual understanding."¹

If these statements are true of the great religions of the world considered in their whole outlook, the same relativity will hold good of the distinctively ethical beliefs which they embody. But even the degree of ultimate validity which Troeltsch assigns to Christianity, strictly qualified as it is by the repeated use of the words "for us," is in his view only sustained at the cost of a constant tension, as the inner persuasion of its truth is maintained against the assaults of an unfriendly world. Baron Friedrich von Hügel pointed this out in his introduction to his friend's lectures, which were written for an English audience, but whose delivery was prevented by the writer's death. "There is now in Dr. Troeltsch a straining, an unrest, a vehemence, honourable indeed to the generous man who persisted thus in a faith supposed by him attainable only by such ceaseless, costly tension; but which, in the actual lives of the great heroes of faith, never forms more than a part, and usually a smaller part, of their means to faith and of the temper of mind thereby attained."² Now that von Hügel, also, is no longer with us, his summary of a lifetime's experience, set thus in contrast to his friend's, has an added impressiveness;

¹ *Christian Thought, its History and Application* (1923), pp. 26-30.

² *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. xxviii.

and few even among Protestants would hesitate to say that at this point the Roman Catholic thinker gives the truer interpretation of an experience which is confined to no one Church. For a conspicuous feature of all the higher reaches of Christian experience is that the sense of conflict and tension becomes subordinate to that of confidence, as the individual, striving spirit realizes more fully his membership in a great community by whose common experience he is supported and upborne.

Yet even this is not the most powerful aid which comes to support him as he endeavours to follow and attain the ideals of the Christian ethic. In other systems, notably in Confucianism, the sense of solidarity is strong, and they thus give the support founded on the sense of a great moral fellowship. But in the ethical teaching of the East there is lacking the belief which Christianity brings that man may not only benefit from the fellowship of man, but that he is granted the opportunity of becoming a fellow worker with God. The question whether "the universe is friendly" receives a negative or a highly doubtful answer from Hinduism or Buddhism ;¹ whereas it is of the essence of Christianity that the fulfilment of its moral precepts is represented as being possible for man because they are one expression of the divine will and purpose. The dynamic aspect of Christian truth is no less essential than the ethical ; and when a purely ethical argument is followed out, as has in the main been done in the foregoing pages, the writer feels at times that he inevitably states the case with less than its due elevation since he speaks of precepts and ideals apart from the

¹ This statement applies to their main, orthodox forms. But within them have arisen teachers like Kabir, and the leaders of mystical sects in South Indian Hinduism and the Buddhist world, of whom it could only be made with much qualification, if at all. Mohammedanism has a positive religious content and hope, but ethically stands in important respects on a lower plane.

power of renewal by which they can be realized. This point may be illustrated by the controversy during recent years regarding the teaching of Jesus on the Kingdom of God. For, while differences of opinion still remain, it is at least clear that the aspect of the Kingdom as a gift of divine grace is more fundamental than its aspect as a task to be worked out by the energy of human wills. No discussion of the place of Christianity among the ethical systems of the world can be conclusive unless it is borne in mind that it is a religion even before it is an ethic.

Along another line of thought we are led to a somewhat similar result. It was pointed out earlier in the present chapter that the great development of our apprehension of the moral ideal has taken place along two lines—its world-wide extension, and its definition as essentially inward and dealing with the most secret motives of the heart. But what does this twofold development mean for those who take ideals seriously? In the first place they are committed to a task which can never be completely fulfilled. "Duty done," says a homely verse, "is the soul's fireside"; but, if duty is as wide as the claims and needs of humanity, the chance of sitting down at that fireside at the day's end is seen to be small indeed. And on the other hand those who accept this view of the Christian ideal as demanding entire purity of motive, and so exceeding even the minute and punctilious virtue of the Pharisees in Jesus's day, can never be sure that they have fulfilled even one single task in conformity with this exacting standard. Among the great ethical thinkers Kant saw this difficulty. The moral law, in his view, was at once categorical and infinitely exacting; but the only solution that he could give was that, as the human spirit is immortal, an infinite time must be granted for the discharge of an infinite obligation. But it brings little

hope to be told that after a journey of incalculable length we may perchance arrive at the goal short of which we cannot find satisfaction.

In the New Testament the solution is different. It is found partly in the thought of forgiveness. We recognize the call to perfection, "Be ye therefore perfect;"¹ and, recognizing how far we come short of attainment even when our endeavour is at its highest, we accept forgiveness of those things in which we fail. But, Common Sense may object, is there not an element of unreality and self-deception in accepting an infinite standard as obligatory, and then professing penitence when it proves, as it always must prove, beyond our reach? Not if the argument of the earlier part of this chapter holds good. For what solution, it may be asked in reply, is Common Sense prepared itself to suggest? To abandon a universal for some narrower form of ethic?² To return from an inward to an external test of goodness? But, if we are not prepared thus to retrace our steps, we must accept the way indicated in the petition, "Forgive us our debts"; and in so doing we are fortified by the fact that those who have travelled furthest along the ethical path of Christianity have found no unreality and no practical contradiction in the twofold experience of an infinite obligation, and a constantly renewed demand for forgiveness. Such men, who are judged by their fellows to have reached the highest level of moral achievement, are indeed most conscious of the degree in which they fall short of the standard on which their eyes are fixed.

It was by facts of this order that one of the greatest teachers of our time, Dr. Bernard Bosanquet, was led,

¹ Matt. v. 48, and the whole previous passage. Cf. St. Paul's crucial assertion, "The law is spiritual" (Rom. vii. 14).

² As Prof. William McDougall practically invites us to do in his *Ethics and Some Modern World Problems*.

while rejecting most of the beliefs usually counted fundamental in theology, to restate the old and unfashionable doctrine of Justification by Faith. He first pointed out the inherent contradiction of morality taken in isolation—"The good is imperative on you here and now, and you are to make it real in and by your will. Fail in doing this . . . and to all conceivable ages you are a moral failure, even if you claim a life continued for ever in which to complete the work. Out of every moral success the further 'ought' springs up inevitably to condemn you once more." Then, turning to the other side, he went on: "Religion—religious faith—is different. For it, the good is indeed real, as morality claims that it should be; but there is something more; for in the end nothing else is real. . . . By worship and self-surrender you repudiate and reject your badness, and will and feel yourself at one with the supreme goodness."¹ In such a way Christianity holds fast to the infinite standard of goodness, and at the same time makes it possible for the individual to accept it without despair. His victory is won for him, yet, in the strength of that fact, he is called ever to win it afresh.

There is one other consideration with a brief reference to which this chapter may close, since it suggests wherein writers like Troeltsch fall short when they represent religion and ethics as alike relative to the history and the culture of different races. Christian and Greek ethics both begin with the life of a historic character, and both draw a large part of their inspiration from the forward look to a perfected community, in which the principles drawn from that life shall be exemplified on the great scale by the unity, loyalty and unselfish service there developed. This latter aspect—the testing of life in the present by reference to a *Civitas Dei* hoped for

¹ *What Religion Is*, ch. i.

in the future—has value in keeping ever before the minds of men the fact that the ideal is at once personal and social, that it cannot be realized save in the growth and discipline of personalities and their free union in the life of a community. But for Christian Ethics the backward look to the character of the Founder is more essential still. It has, in truth, been an unfailing means of renewal when the morality of his followers has become half-hearted and conventional. So we may now state the question from which we set out, whether there is an absolute ethic, in the personal and concrete form—Are the men of the future ever likely to go beyond Jesus Christ, or to cease to find the highest inspiration and guidance in his example?

Materials for an answer might be found on many sides; but I shall be content to quote two notable utterances from India.¹ “My study of modern history,” said a Hindu professor of that subject, “has shown me that there is a Moral Pivot in the world, and that more and more the best life of East and West is revolving about that Pivot. That Pivot is Jesus Christ.” The second saying must be given in its setting, as described by Mr. Holland, “A gathering of some twelve or fifteen thousand Indians had met in the open air in Calcutta to welcome Mr. Gandhi. First came two hours of Bengali oratory; fulsome flattery of India and of Mr. Gandhi. I was occupying a place in the front row quite close to Mr. Gandhi, who was on the platform. Throughout the proceedings he appeared to be undergoing acute pain. . . . The flow of flattery over, Mr. Gandhi rose to make his reply. . . . The whole concourse shuffled themselves on the ground, getting ready to listen for an hour or two to the great

¹ Both are contained in an article by the Rev. W. E. S. Holland in the *Guardian*, June 6, 1924.

speech of the evening. If my memory serves, he began without preface, and delivered himself of one single sentence, 'There is, I think, only one contribution which I can usefully make to this afternoon's proceedings, and that is to say that, speaking for myself, the deepest lessons of my life have been learned from One who never set foot in India.' And he sat down."

Abstract arguments are of little avail in answering a question which bears entirely on a Personality. But in the light of such sayings as those just quoted, we can hardly fail to acknowledge that the last two generations, which have destroyed so much else, have but confirmed the testimony of nineteen centuries to the moral supremacy of Jesus Christ. As time passes it grows harder to believe that mankind will ever outgrow the inspiration drawn from his character, or will find an ideal better fitted to draw forth their devotion and to guide them through the perplexities of life.

CHAPTER VII

CONFLICTING OBLIGATIONS

H. J. W. HETHERINGTON, M.A.

(a) INDIVIDUAL ACTION

I.—A CONCRETE THEORY OF THE MORAL IDEAL

THE preceding chapters of this book have sought to expound and to defend a way of approach to the problems of the moral life. What has been said is, on one side, a theory of the moral ideal, an account of the elements which enter into a consistent and illuminating standard of moral judgment and action and of the order in which these elements are related to one another. But, on another side, as we have claimed, our theory touches the world of our ordinary thought and practice. The account of the ideal is drawn from reflection upon and insight into the structure and necessities of our actual civilization, and points the way of its true development. The ideal is a Kingdom whose material is the capacities of men and women as these are expressed and matured in their daily activities and enjoyments, and in the institutions, associations and relationships which they have created in the course of these pursuits. It has an analogue and a partial realization in the world of which we are members : and only through that world will its nature be more fully revealed. We conceive the Kingdom, therefore, as at once achieved and in process of achieve-

ment in the best that we know. We think of it as an organized social whole in which by mutual harmony and support each individual reaches out to and attains in the measure of his powers those qualities and activities which, in our experience, are characteristic of life at its fullest and most satisfying range. We state its content in terms of plenitude of physical health, of energy, fidelity and happiness in work, of delight in all forms of neighbourliness, friendship and affection, and of participation in those goods which increase by being shared, excellence of character, love of beauty, devotion to truth—all alike consecrated and inspired by communion with the indwelling Love which is God.

We hold, then, that our theory is concrete—that as it is drawn from the world of our daily practice, so it throws light upon it. We are bound, therefore, to inquire what its meaning is for the various spheres and relationships of our ordinary duties. It is true that the primary aim of ethical theory is knowledge rather than action, that it gives “light, not heat;” and we shall see in a moment the limits of the practical teaching of any moral theory. But no serious doctrine, however strenuously it may maintain its strictly theoretical character, can escape the challenge that it should in some measure offer guidance in practice: and Christian ethic makes no such disclaimer. From its foundation it has met and accepted the summons to point a way through the perplexities of life. In our succeeding chapters some account is given of the implications of our theory with reference to various special regions of activity. Here we are concerned with the more general question of conflicting obligations. Does our theory help us at all to see our way through the familiar difficulty where a man genuinely anxious to do the good if he could know it, finds himself faced by claims which are, or which seem to be, incompatible

with one another, and where, it appears, he can do one good only at the cost of sacrificing another ?

II.—THE EMERGENCE OF CONFLICTS OF OBLIGATION

The difficulty, we have said, is familiar. There is a common saying that "it is easy enough to know one's duty and hard to do it," which emphasizes the fact that cases of genuine moral perplexity are comparatively few. It is perhaps well that that aspect of the matter should be stressed. For it is true that as a rule the line of a man's duty—"the duty that lies next to hand"—is tolerably clear : and it is a mistake to think of the moral life as a series of puzzling dilemmas. In one sense, every action we perform, the spending of every sixpence, requires the solution of a conflict of competing claims. But in fact most of our problems arise in connection with well-defined and well-understood relationships : and usually, we may rely upon the moral experience and wisdom of our society as expressed in its ordinances, conventions and public opinion to furnish us with sufficient guidance. Nevertheless, as responsible moral beings, we can never *merely* accept : we must prove and test and judge and sometimes initiate. We cannot escape that necessity, for the way is not always clear. There are occasions when more than one clue to our action is offered to us, and when we can find no clear priority of one over another. We have to choose *either* one good *or* another, to accept one of two conflicting claims, to abide by one of two competing loyalties. Then we have to ask, "Under which rule?" It is not that one is good and the other evil—not even that one is greater good and the other less. In that case there would be no difficulty. It is that both seem to stand for and to sustain aspects of the complete and highest good, or to arise out

of relationships equally important. A man is called, let us say, to undertake some important public duty which he can accept only at the cost of withdrawing from some other public or private enterprise to which he has pledged himself. Or, of his children, one may show such promise as to make it seem worth while giving him educational advantages which can be purchased only at the cost of denying to the others opportunities which they would otherwise have had. Or a statesman or Trade Union leader finds himself constrained by his view of his country's interest to take a decision which threatens to wreck his party or his Union, although he believes that the integrity and stability of the smaller unit is of great importance to the welfare of the country as a whole.

These situations, if in number few compared to those in which our duty is clearly marked out, are still common enough : more common now perhaps than ever before since the definite boundaries of one's station in life and the leading that it gives to duty are shifting and changing with the new demands and conditions of society. For these serious conflicts of obligation arise from a failure of adjustment in the relationships in which each individual stands to other members of the community, and are incidents of the demand which the community makes upon him. Societies of a much simpler type than ours have given rise to such conflicts. Abraham, e.g., had to choose between loyalty to a (presumed) religious ordinance and the claim of family affection : Antigone, between obedience to the decree of the state and the requirements of private piety. It is perhaps permissible to suppose that in the ideal society, however complex its organization, all interests are perfectly harmonized, so that there is no discordance between the relationships in which the individual stands and no contradiction

between the claims which each makes upon him. But in an imperfect social order, as every society of finite human beings must be, dissonance and contradiction are in some degree inevitable : and especially in times of rapid change, conflicts of obligation may press sharply on the individual moral agent.

III.—LIMITS OF ANY THEORETICAL SOLUTION—THE WORK OF THE PRACTICAL MORAL INTELLIGENCE

What, then, has Christian ethic to say on this problem ? Does it offer any general solution for these antinomies of the practical moral life ? If we put our question in this way, seeking for some formula which will provide a ready-made solution to all moral difficulties, it is clear that we shall not find it in the Christian or in any other ethical teaching. No theory can furnish a precise rule for every situation in life : and morality is wrongly conceived when it is taken to be a simple matter of the application of a rule. Analysis can no doubt distinguish the main typical positions with which the individual is likely to be confronted : but it can never foresee the detail of these situations or estimate the nuances of the infinitely variable complexities of practice. No two sets of circumstances are ever exactly alike : every moral action is in its degree unique and creative, a way of response to a situation which is in some way different from any that has occurred or can again occur. It is the precise business of the moral intelligence to discern the requirements of a given situation, and to discover the mode of action which most adequately meets them : and though ethical theory may assist the intelligence in that insight, it can never relieve it of its own burden of labour. The perfection of the moral attitude, the discovery of the exactly fitting response is just as much

an affair of "fundamental brainwork" as the creation of a work of art or the elaboration of a scientific theory. In the one case, as in the others, the study of the work of the masters, the comprehension of the principles which have guided or have revealed themselves in their practice, is an all-important propædæutic. But simple imitation, direct conformity to established rules, is not the precept of effective action. The insight of those who have gone before must become, must be made one's own through the long discipline of habituated thought and action : and it must seek and receive fresh expression in every deed of the moralized character.

It hardly needs demonstration that only thus, only through the constructive imagination which can discern fresh applications of the moral principle, and the modes of its concrete operation in the changing circumstances of life, can any moral teaching preserve its vitality and power. Christ himself gave no rigid precepts. He enjoined only the universal principle of Love as the central motive of all morality ; and showed how in lives ruled by that principle, it worked itself out, sometimes to surprising issues. True, insight into its meaning is not a prerogative of the learned or of the worldly-wise. But with all its childlike directness and simplicity of view, the moral spirit is not naïve, and its perceptive wisdom is bought at the price of its own participation in the discipline of social action. Hence Christ set no limits to the ways in which the good will might respond to the demands of its time and circumstances. New ways would declare themselves of making whole the broken edges of human relations, and of eliciting the possibilities for good latent in the contradictions of experience.

When, therefore, we inquire as to the teaching of Christian ethic on our problem of the conflict of obliga-

tions, we shall not expect to find a solution that relieves the moral intelligence of the task which is at once its crisis and its point of growth. If we claim that Christian ethic is pre-eminently a practical doctrine, we mean not that it has carried its analysis of moral situations further than other doctrines, nor that it affords a larger rubric of rules ready to hand, but just that the principle which it enunciates—the principle of Love—is richer and more concrete, that it is capable of fruitful application to a wider range of situations, and more fitted to inspire the will to follow the path which it appoints.

IV.—GENERAL TYPES OF CONFLICT

We may begin, then, by considering in what ways a conflict of obligations is apt to arise. We may distinguish perhaps three main forms.

(1) The good, as we have seen, is of richly diverse content : and for any individual the good life means the full and ordered development of his many-sided nature through the sharing in many social interests. It is evident, too, that by reason of his finitude, it is in fact open even to the most gifted individual to enter only into a limited number of human interests ; and to enter only a little way into any one of them. If he seeks to enter into his inheritance of knowledge, he can do so only at the cost of accepting some restriction of physical vigour, or of the enjoyment of social intercourse, or of the pursuit of excellence in music or in any other of the arts.¹ Even within the field of knowledge itself, competence in one sphere must be bought by the neglect of other spheres intrinsically no less attractive. Hence,

¹ Cf. the well-known passage in Darwin's autobiography, in which he laments the loss, through his devotion to scientific studies, of his power of æsthetic enjoyment.

even were the individual agent under no other necessity than that of promoting his own personal welfare, he would still be faced by something like a conflict of obligations—claims on his allegiance by different elements of the complete good, between which he is forced to choose.

(2) Again, there may arise a conflict between the individual's own personal good and that of the social whole to which he belongs. His strongest personal interests may draw him to one line of activity: the immediately pressing claims of some sphere of social duty may require him to give himself to some other pursuit. A man may feel it in him to make something of a career in, say, music or in literature: and may be quite sure that only if he can give his main energy to that interest will his work express his best powers. If he had only himself to consider, as we say, he would willingly take the risk of economic loss involved in a change of profession. But he must maintain his family: and must weigh that duty against the prospect of a greater satisfaction for himself.

(3) And thirdly there is the case which we have already illustrated in which two of the relationships in which the individual stands to his social world impose upon him claims which are incompatible with one another. This, as we shall see, is the most serious and difficult case, involving sometimes considerations of great complexity. Sometimes the conflict arises simply from the simultaneity of two duties, when two claims, not in themselves contradictory, and both capable of satisfaction if only they could be spaced out conveniently in time, call for the immediate attention of the agent, so that he must choose one and ignore the other. Or sometimes it is due to the recognition of the possible duty of preparing for greater though more distant, and

to some extent problematic calls, at the cost of letting slip nearer and more immediate, though intrinsically less important services. Or sometimes it may happen that there seems to be a straight contradiction between the demands of one relationship and those of another, so that to do what one requires is to deny, and so far, to overthrow the other.

V.—REMARKS ON SOLUTION OF THESE

It will be agreed that these three cases show an ascending order of the depth and severity of the conflict involved. (1) In the first case, perhaps, the word "conflict" is out of place. The problem, as here stated, is no more than a recognition of the fact of finitude, of the law that in order to be anything we must be content to forgo most things. It is this which is expressed in the saying that every act of self-realization is at the same time an act of self-sacrifice, that sacrifice is an inevitable part of every human action. There is no doubt of the fact: but we should feel that to call it "sacrifice" makes too much of it. Admittedly it is an important and difficult problem for every individual to determine in what main way he will try to lay hold of the good for himself, what interests are to be central in his life, for what main ends it is to be lived. But we do not ordinarily feel as a source of contradiction and uncertainty in ourselves a limiting condition which is not peculiar to us, but universal over the whole human race. We may dream of a wider knowledge, or a more varied culture than is within our reach; we may "wish" that we could give ourselves more fully to the understanding of things that lie outside the range of our ordinary and absorbing work, of painting or sculpture or Chinese pottery or Minoan antiquities: and we take what we can of these

interests. But they scarcely present themselves to us as imperative claims : we recognize that we may not allow them to distract us from the main business of our lives.¹ We should feel that a conflict which originated simply in the rich variety of human interests was little more than a call to more vigorous and persistent living.

(2) It is evidence of the abstractness of a discussion of a purely "personal" good that we have spoken as if the individual were wholly free to choose the main direction of his central interests. In the most profound and decisive sense he is so. He is free to determine in what spirit and for what purposes he will employ the opportunities which life offers to him. But from the standpoint of everyday experience, it seems that there is very little choice in the settlement of the content and direction of the individual experience. That is determined for him by the society and by the place in that society into which he happens to come. Largely, e.g., it is a matter of the profession or occupation in which the hours of the working day are spent, and by which the individual secures for himself a footing in his world and makes much of his contribution to its material and moral life : and for a very large proportion of our population, choice of occupation is little influenced by personal predisposition or capacity. Few people can afford to wait for the post that "suits" them. A man takes what offers ; he can hardly do otherwise ; and finds himself committed to a line of activity which shapes and moulds body and mind alike, and from which, as the years pass, it becomes more difficult to dissociate himself.

¹ Of course it is not suggested that any one of these pursuits or of any other of the countless human interests may not properly be the main business of some life. But in that case other and more ordinary interests become subordinate to them.

Hence the not uncommon occurrence of the second type of conflict which we have distinguished, in which a man finds that the pursuit which would most fully call out his powers is one upon which, by reason of pressing social obligations, he may not venture to embark. There is a conflict between his own personal good and that of a social group—whether his family, or some other, dependent upon him. Here, no doubt, the conflict is more severe than in our earlier case. But in so far as the case is rightly stated to be a conflict between personal good and social duty, we do not feel either that the conflict is of tragic depth or that there is, in principle, any doubt as to its solution. Christian ethic, at least, though it holds by the ultimate reconciliation, and even identity of the two, emphasizes duty rather than good. And in truth, when the individual is taken in the full concreteness of his social relations, it is evident that the conflict is not between personal good and social duty, but between two aspects of the same good, whether that be stated as personal or social. For the individual belongs to that social group which has a claim upon him: and his good is bound up with it. Partial conflict there may be, but never complete, and the individual's subordination of himself to the wider good is not sheer loss or pure self-sacrifice.¹

(3) We feel, then, that the conflict touches a deeper

¹ It is worth while noting that this second type of conflict is likely to become more rare with the progress of the moral organization of society. Occupational "misfits" will be greatly diminished in number as our educational system becomes more liberal and varied, and our industrial system more intelligent in its methods of recruitment. Greater leisure (given the power to use it wisely) brings the possibility of an immense enlargement of the range of individual interest beyond that of his occupation, though in a healthy society a man's occupation will always be one of his strongest interests. Behind all this discussion, of course, lies the question of the distribution of the necessary routine and even "dirty" work. Cf. ch. x.

level when it comes in our third form as a contradiction between the claims of two significant social relationships. In the preceding case, e.g., the individual's question may arise not from considerations of his own personal satisfaction, but from the possibility of richer service to society as a whole. He may believe that by his present line of activity he is thwarting powers which are capable of yielding far higher and more important social service : and yet recognize that if he seek that wider sphere, he may bring hardship to his family. Here, where the choice is not concerned with personal good, but with objective duties, we feel that we are in the region of genuine conflict ; and it is here that the solution is hardest.

VI.—THE PRINCIPLE OF THE SOLUTION

When we ask what the solution is, it is easy enough to discern the principle of it. The moral agent is bound to choose that way of service which promises best to advance the realization of that Kingdom which we have taken as the concrete expression of the moral ideal. That is his criterion—efficacy of service to the Kingdom, how best to achieve its rich and varied and harmonious life. So much is clear : and we have seen reason to think that little more can be said in advance of particular concrete situations. But two conclusions, of a very general kind, seem to follow.

(1) *Reconciliation or Synthesis*.—Of any conflict, clearly the best solution is reconciliation. Hence the first and natural effort of the moral intelligence is to find some way of adjusting the conflicting claims, so that, if possible, both, or what is essential in both, may be satisfied. The very nature of the mind both in knowing and in acting is to organize ; to make room for and to bring together

in unity facets or aspects of experience which seem at first to be mutually contradictory. It is hard to place any limit to the power of an imaginative and enlightened will, which feels deeply every element in the situation with which it is confronted, to discover some mode of action which brings to light the synthesis of their apparent contradiction.¹ That is why a conflict left simply as a conflict, so that the will must choose either one duty or the other, finding no way to meet them both, is often felt by the sensitive conscience to be a defeat of the moral intelligence. Circumstances may be hard and complex ; but the responsive mind feels that there is a solution, if only he had insight to reach it. Part at least of the responsibility for failure he ascribes to his own defect.²

This process of reconciliation and organization may sometimes bear a resemblance to that less penetrating process which we call compromise : for outwardly it may take the form of a proportionate diminution of both the

¹ Thus (to take one of the examples given above), a man called to undertake a new form of service which requires the relinquishing of present interests will try all expedients to find a mode of meeting *both* claims. He may, e.g., look for and train someone to undertake his old responsibilities, handing over the fruits of his experience and work.

² Thus, to revert again to our examples, a statesman or Trade Union leader may feel that if he had only the skill to present to his colleagues the national issue as he sees it, and to show the relation of their sectional action to the national welfare, he could preserve the unity of his group and yet be faithful to his duty to the whole community.

It will be clear that what has been said above as to the possibility of a solution in many (perhaps, in principle, in all) cases of conflict, is in actual practice subject to the heavy discount that sometimes a decision has to be taken so speedily that there is no opportunity for the moral intelligence to enter deeply into the situation. It must act on the surface appearance of things. And although, in such an emergency, the disciplined and discerning intelligence will make more of the situation than the untrained mind, it may nevertheless be tied down to a choice of alternatives,—either this or that, and the possibility of a synthesis may not be really open.

conflicting claims. But in principle, what is aimed at is not simply a *modus vivendi*, a way of getting through the situation somehow, so that it does not utterly break down in our hands, but the severer and more positive end of meeting and fulfilling the requirements of the situation as comprehensively as is possible to us. The attitude of compromise is apt to be morally suspect;¹ and rightly when it is taken to mean that in cases of difficulty we may give up the attempt to discover what duty really requires, and be content to "split the difference." The duty to make the most of a situation is absolute; and whatever be discerned as the mode of our fullest service presents itself as a categorical imperative, subject to no refinement or palliation. But that is not to say that the mediation of conflicting demands may not be a step in that synthetic and organizing process which is the characteristic act of the moral will.

(2) *The Claim of the Wider Loyalty*.—Is there then any rule which may be taken to guide this activity of synthesis? Or (it is almost the same question) if no complete synthesis is in fact available, and we are still tied down to a choice, *either* this *or* that, but not both, is there any rule on which we can decide between the claims? We have noted the general principle, that we must choose that which promises the most effective advancement of our concrete moral ideal. Is there in Christian ethics any further suggestion as to what in practice this principle enjoins?

¹ The judgment as to the moral character of "compromise" is perhaps apt to be obscured by the fact that the word is often used to describe not (as in the text) the process of finding a middle way between two authentic duties, so as to satisfy in part the requirements of both, but rather the process of finding a middle way between the satisfaction of a moral demand and the indulgence of some personal inclination which we know to have no standing against that demand. In this latter sense, compromise is clearly morally wrong.

It is clear from our previous discussion that no more than a suggestion is possible. There can be no *rule*. And perhaps the most that can be said is where the choice is obscure and uncertain, Christian ethic offers a presumption in favour of the claim of the larger group. Such a presumption seems to be implied in the emphasis laid upon self-sacrifice, and in the many striking and difficult passages which call for the subordination of the nearer and more obvious interests of the professed follower of Christ.¹

It is not hard to see the grounds for such a tendency. We more readily recognize and respond to the claim of the nearer and more familiar group, reinforced as that is by the warmer and more intimate feelings of interest and sentiment which bind us to it. In a conflict between our obligations to the wider and the narrower unities of which we are members, our "personal equation" will usually (not always) tell more strongly for the latter: and the leading of Christian ethic is that when the wider claim presses for recognition, its genuine force is likely to be stronger than we allow. Hence the presumption of the priority of its claim. But not more than that. For if it is true that the narrower loyalty presses upon us more powerfully, it is equally true that the narrower field usually offers us the sphere and instrument of our most certain and palpable service. Thus it will often happen that a man's best service to the moral community is through the agencies which lie closer to his hand and which he can most strongly influence. It is easy to conceive, e.g., that a scientific worker on the track of some important theoretical discovery, or an artist at

¹ Cf. Matt. x. 37, Mark viii. 34, Luke xii. 52. Passage for passage it would be easy to set against words such as these, others emphasizing the importance of our nearer and more homely duties. But there is no doubt about the main accent of the teaching of Christ and of the Christian tradition.

the moment of creation, may rightly set aside many urgent claims for other forms of service from his family or state for the sake of what looks like a purely personal satisfaction. For him, the choice of the apparently narrowest group of all is really the choice of the way of his most truly significant service to the whole. The decisive question is not one of wider or narrower fields of action, but of the mode that promises best the realization of the Kingdom. The demand which here and now most fully stands for that has the claim to our acceptance and loyalty. And we must be prepared to recognize that even in apparently the same circumstances, men will rightly vary in their judgments as to the line of their duty. "All flesh is not the same flesh." Neither is all spirit the same spirit. Diversity of gifts conferring on different men different powers of service, imposes on them thereby different obligations. A man conscious of his special gifts for pursuits which seem to lie aside from the path of ordinary duty, but which yet enrich the variety of spiritual expression in our world will justly feel that these bring home to him a call which another may pass by. No doubt there is room here for much self-deception. It is easy to mistake a natural propensity for a heaven-sent endowment. But if a man be honest with himself, and concerned to give not what he wants to give, but what, in his time and place, he can give best, the discipline of life and the pressure of circumstance may be trusted to show him something of the truth. A man's "vocation"—his normal field of service—is not a function of his own aptitudes alone. It is the function of his gifts in a determinate environment, which has shaped them to certain ends, and offers opportunity for their manifestation. And his attitude will not be wrong if he is willing that that environment—the world as widely conceived as is concretely possible to him—

should use him in the fashion for which he has been prepared.¹

VII.—VARIATION IN MORAL STANDARDS

This perhaps is as much as need be said on the general problem of conflicting obligations so far as these may be supposed to arise from the different relationships in which the individual stands to other individuals, and to the groups and associations which make up the social whole. There is, however, a further consideration which we have so far neglected, but which often adds an element of complexity to the situation of conflict. It is that within these various social groups, very different conventions as to the requirements of moral action obtain. It is a commonplace, e.g., that a man behaves to his neighbours on the Stock Exchange quite otherwise than he does to perhaps the same people in the ordinary friendly intercourse of social life, and that he conceives his duty to the whole outside world to impose demands upon him which are in many ways less than those which he recognizes towards his own family.

Here, of course, is the chosen field of the social satirist, who draws out the full flavour of the contrast between the moral professions of the Church and the practice of the market: and there is no denying his title to his occupation. But it is important to see where the problem lies. It does not lie in the fact that one conceives oneself to have different duties towards various categories of one's fellows, and that these different kinds of duties crystallize into different codes. For in these various spheres, one stands in genuinely different relations to others; and it is inevitable and necessary that that difference should be reflected in the conventions which express what these

¹ Cf. Epilogue to the book.

relationships require. Morality, we have insisted, is not conformity to established rules, but an attitude of mind and a living principle: and a principle operates in different ways according to its theatre of application. Hence morality does not require that the individual should behave in the same way in every set of social relations, that towards a client or customer, or an employer or an employé, he should feel and act with the same anxious and personal concern as he has for his own children. Morality, so conceived, would be a self-defeating process: for if a man were to try to live by it, he would have no freedom of mind for his proper business and function, and would fail in the primary task of sustaining his part of the life of the community. Differences in relationship and practice, therefore, are natural and intelligible. Difficulty arises only when the actions reflecting these relationships are not merely different, but contradictory and incapable of unification, when they express not one attitude, but many distinct attitudes, some of them much lower than others. The true aim, therefore, of the moral agent is not uniformity of action, but consistency of attitude; that his business and all other relations should be recognized as fields of moral activity, as forms and channels of his service to the moral ideal, parts of the whole area of rights and obligations, over which is operative a single principle of will.

Once more, what in detail this unity of will involves cannot be prescribed beforehand. In most cases, the individual is not left to his own resources. For defective as is the moralization, say, of economic relations in our present social order, they are not wholly exempt from the control of moral principles: and in the best practice of the office, the exchange or the factory, the individual will find more guidance than might at first sight be apparent.

If one thinks, e.g., of perhaps the commonest, if not the most difficult, moral question raised by economic relations, the distribution of the product of organized industry in the form of the proportionate payments to be made to the various factors in production, there is an immense volume of intelligent and fruitful experiment available for the instruction of an employer who wants to reach a "just" solution of the problem. It is true, of course, that no one man by his own efforts can do all that he may wish to do towards achieving a more satisfactory result. He will find his action limited and constrained by the standards and practices prevailing in other undertakings of the same sort as his own. To that extent, he will feel the strain of conflict; and may have for the time being to accept a solution less satisfactory than that which he believes to be possible. But that need be nothing other than a challenge to the moral will, that keeps it on the strain for better things. It is certain that progress here is not to be won at less cost than in any other sphere. The man who sets himself to make moral principles more powerfully effective in those relations of life in which they are still only partially operative will encounter the inertia and even hostility of a strongly entrenched existing order. Nevertheless, to deny the importance of that effort and the duty of attempting it, is to exclude from the province of morality certain inevitable forms of human relationship; to make a refusal that ultimately breaks the integrity of the moral attitude in every mode of its expression. Whatever problems may be set for the solution of the moral intelligence, there is no impugning its sovereignty over the whole range of life, or its demand not for similarity of conduct, but for identity of principle and consistency of application over all spheres of interest and of action.

VIII.—THE PROBLEM OF “REPRESENTATIVE” ACTION

This discussion brings to light a further element in our problem, the fact, namely, that often in our modern world an individual is called upon to act not in his own personal right or capacity, but as the agent or officer of some social group : so that he has to consider not only his own view of what is right, and his own stake in the issue, but the views and interests of others. A contractor, e.g., may feel obliged to make a stand for a higher level of commercial morality, and would rather lose a contract than make use of the methods of bribery and “graft” which may be necessary to secure it. An editor may be willing, even at the risk of loss of circulation and revenue, to exclude from his columns some kinds of sensational news. In both cases if the risk could fall on the agent himself, he would gladly take it. But it falls also on his workmen and shareholders for whom, in some sense, he acts, and he may reasonably feel that he cannot adventure their interest as freely as he may his own.

There is clearly a genuine and difficult problem here. It is impossible to apply to “representative” actions the same criteria as are applied to private deeds. The judge—to take an extreme example—is not responsible for the infliction of the death penalty, though it is he who pronounces sentence. And by the authority, and in the name of the state or of other social groups, individuals have constantly to act in ways in which as private persons they could not act, and sometimes even in ways at variance with their own views as to the requirements of the situation. Such actions are not to be, and in fact are not, held to be relevant to the judgment of the individual character in the same degree, or even in the same way, as actions of a more private kind.

Yet it remains a problem for the individual himself as to how far, in any given circumstances, he is right to give effect to his own (in his judgment higher) view of the moral necessities of the position, and how far he must work by the established rules.

The difficulty of the problem is greater as the degree to which he is "representative" is less well defined. A judge, e.g., is almost completely representative. He must administer an existing body of law : and no question of his personal view is allowed to enter except in so far as the law confers upon him discretionary powers. Even where he believes the law to be unjust, he must still—as judge—administer it : though he may endeavour to secure by the means open to him the changes in the law which he thinks to be desirable. The relations of an employer to his workmen and shareholders, or of a statesman to his fellow countrymen are much less strictly defined : and as his personal responsibility is greater, so his problem is harder to solve. There is seldom any detailed formulation of the policy which he has to carry out : he is indeed himself the main instrument for the shaping of such a policy. And yet, he has accepted his office and function in the economic or political organization of the country, under sufficiently understood general conventions and conditions which are recognized as obtaining in these spheres of action. He cannot at short notice violently change these conditions in accordance with his own personal view, however much he may feel assured that his principles and policies are higher and wiser than those which are current. So long as he remains a "representative," he must work broadly within the conditions set for him by the moral opinion of those whom he represents. When to him that becomes impossible, he must resign his representative function.

Here, as elsewhere, there are no rules to be prescribed. What the limits of duty are, how far, e.g., the statesman may act in advance of the opinion of his time, is not capable of theoretical determination, but can be settled only by the trained practical judgment at the crisis of action. It is the supreme test of a leader's capacity in politics or in industry or in any other sphere to know how far he may act by the best mind of those whom he represents, and yet be sure of bringing the general mind of his people to that level.¹ And his power depends in part on the justice of his insight into moral issues. A true insight will justify itself in practice: and that will be the most convincing recommendation of the statesman and his policy, and the most persuasive instrument of the education of his people.

IX.—CONCLUSION

The conclusions of this consideration of the problem of conflict may perhaps be held to point a direction, but not to establish a rigid rule. The principle of the moral will, we have seen, is to elicit from any given circumstances the most that these can be made to yield of positive realization of our moral ideal. It aims, therefore, at solving apparent conflicts of obligation by reconciliation or synthesis or harmony. And to discern the way thereto is the true function of the constructive moral intelligence. Where its success is imperfect, where, that is, it is forced to choose between one loyalty and another, we have held that there is a presumption, but no general rule, that the wider, less personal loyalty has

¹ It is no doubt true that statesmen and others similarly placed are as a rule more apt to under- rather than over-estimate the heights to which the general mind will rise if it is rightly led. They venture too little rather than too much. Nevertheless there is still a limit beyond which the statesman cannot either effectively or rightly go.

the stronger claim, that such is the practical outcome of the Christian emphasis on "self-sacrifice," on "dying to live." We have had in mind, so far, the problem as it arises in connection with the action of an individual moral agent. But there is a further problem, concerning the issue as it arises not in individual action but in the action of groups, and to that we may now turn.

CHAPTER VIII

CONFLICTING OBLIGATIONS

H. J. W. HETHERINGTON, M.A.

(b) IN GROUP ACTION

I.—THE PROBLEM

THE question which we have now briefly to consider emerges naturally from the discussion of the preceding chapter. There we looked at the problem of the conflict of obligations as that discloses itself in the experience of the individual moral agent. We found a hint of a line of solution in the presumption in favour of the larger loyalty. When, then, a group or institution—a family, a profession, a city, a state—finds that what it believes to be its interest or duty, conflicts with that of a wider unit, and when in the last resort its decision as a corporate body is between either the assertion of its own view, or acquiescence in that of the wider group, how far does our presumption hold—that its duty points in the latter direction?

To enter fully into this question would carry us into the difficult problem of the nature of the mind or will of an institution: and of the way in which these several “group minds” are related to and interpenetrate one another. But we may try to state the practical issue as it arises in our existing social order, raising only as lightly as possible the controversial points

involved. Ultimately, it is clear, the action of a group is determined by the view which its individual members take of that group and of its purpose, and of the claims made on behalf of that purpose in relation to the other ends of social life. An institution exists in and through the minds of its members. And though in outward form it may maintain itself in relative isolation from other institutions, yet in its inward and essential being that isolation is corrected by its contact in the minds of its members with the other social interests which they severally and corporately sustain. Hence, a conflict between the claims of two institutions is not, in principle, different from a conflict between two loyalties in the individual life. The difference in detail is simply that a group of people has to consider, not each for himself, but each in association with others, the relative importance of the conflicting claims from the point of view of the welfare of society as a whole. A group, indeed, can make no *moral* claim except in so far as that claim is more than the self-assertion of a particular and exclusive social unit. The claim has no basis in right unless it is defensible from the point of view of a wider social whole; unless it can be held to be compatible with or required by the interest of that whole. Thus, to take the very simplest case, the claim of a Trade Union for an increase in wages becomes a moral issue when it represents a demand for such a re-distribution of the resources of the community as will advance the material and the moral purposes of the community as a whole.

It follows then that no *moral* claims can be made by any group which are not made from the standpoints of a wider interest than that of the group itself; and that such claims are always, in principle, reconcilable with one another. No contradiction can arise except in so

far as that wider point of view fails to be operative in the minds of the individual groups: and the solution of the conflict is to be sought in the discovery of what the true necessities of the whole community require. Faced with a conflict, therefore, the duty of any group is just to test its own demand from that standpoint, and to maintain only that which can be so justified.

But an argument that a solution is thus always in principle attainable, takes us no great distance in dealing with an actual conflict. For this wider point of view from which a reconciliation is to be sought, carries very different meanings to different individuals, and to different groups. There are many opinions as to what the real interest of the community as a whole is: and many more as to what in any particular situation that interest demands. The several interests and purposes represented in the various institutions and groups are not integrated into a single will, conscious of itself as a whole, in the same way in which the ends of an individual agent are organized into the unity of his individual will. Hence the control of the parts by the whole is less directly effected: and the narrower groups may find that they meet on too small a basis of primary agreement on which to reach a synthesis of their opposing claims. Are we then left with a conflict, theoretically soluble but practically adamant?

II.—THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE

It would be so were it not for the fact that this general mind of the community, discrete and inchoate as it may appear to be, is yet not without a witness and embodiment in our external social order. For normally when two institutions reach the point of an impassable conflict of claims, it is recognized that it

devolves upon another institution—that which we call the state—to discover and to express a solution which is in conformity with the interest and point of view of the whole community. The state moreover is equipped with powers of compulsion far greater than those of any other institution: and is able more fully than they to insist that its solution shall prevail. Even when the state itself is a party to the conflict it has the power to judge in its own case and to give effect to its judgment.

In our actual social order, therefore, a certain priority over all other institutions clearly attaches to the state. And it does so because in some sense the state is held to represent an interest wider, more universal and more immediately urgent, though not necessarily higher than that of any other institution in the community which it covers. At the lowest, this interest may be stated as simply the community's necessity for the peaceful settlement of such disputes as arise within it. But by the very fact that man is a moral being, a mere settlement is never in itself the whole desideratum. If it is to endure at all, it must be made in accordance with some conception of the merits of the case, and of the relation of the claims of the disputants to some tolerably clear idea of the interest, welfare and ideals of the community as a whole. The state as the authoritative organ for the adjustment of relations may start as a mere external mechanism, designed to keep order somehow in the community. But it cannot permanently remain on that level. The order which it keeps must be a reflection of a more or less articulate view of the kind of order that is worth keeping, and of how the relations of institutions to one another may express the relations of the varied purposes which a civilized community may think to be realizable in its own life. In that sense, we may speak of the state as embodying a "general will,"

as the representative and guardian of the idea of a kind of life which the community takes to be desirable.¹

We have noticed the difficulty that may be felt in speaking of a "general will." No doubt every state has frequently to act as if the general will represented in and by it were much more determinate and precise than it really is : and no doubt also there are all degrees of imperfection in the extent to which existing states embody such general wills as may be said to exist. But it can hardly be disputed that at least in communities which have developed tolerably adequate and stable political institutions, there is existing and operative a consensus of opinion which can be described in this way.

That is why a state can act more energetically and effectively in some directions than in others—in those directions namely in which there is a large measure of public agreement as to the policy to be pursued. And that is why also the trend of constitutional development among civilized communities is as a rule towards a democratic form of government : for under that form of government it is believed that the action of the state is more rapidly responsive to the opinion of its members.²

¹ It will appear in the sequel that thus to recognize the state as (at its best) the institution specifically concerned to express and uphold a scheme of moral relationships, does not commit us to the view that any existing state may justly claim in relation to its members, or to other institutions, that it is, in its own right, the supreme moral institution, or the ultimate repository of their moral obligation. On the contrary, it commits us to the precise denial of any such claim.

² It is, of course, a much vexed question as to whether our present form of "state" is the best that can be devised for the purpose which we have assigned to it, and which in fact it discharges. It may be possible to discover constitutional devices which could produce an institution more adequately representative of the mind of the community than is our present parliamentary and local government system. Existing defects in our organization may make it more difficult on any particular occasion for an individual or group to determine its present duty. But they do not affect the principle of our argument. There must always be some institution carrying the general authority of the community as a whole, and therefore claiming priority over others.

Here then, under existing conditions, we may fairly hold that we have a clue to the solution of conflicts between institutions. Where they fail to achieve for themselves a reconciliation of their opposing demands, it is normally incumbent upon them to accept the solution offered by or on behalf of the state as the representative of that wider system of social interest to which both institutions belong. We cannot, of course, hold that duty invariably requires that attitude. A social group is no more called upon than is the individual agent, to put its conscience in the keeping of another. It has the right and the duty to judge the decision of the state by its own reading of the moral necessities of the situation. It may believe either that the state has failed to represent the true mind of the community,¹ or that that mind is itself too little enlightened to reach a just decision. Even in accepting, therefore, a group may not acquiesce—it may seek by a process of public education to bring about those conditions which will result in a changed decision. In the extreme case, it may be the duty of the institution as of the individual to resist the state, holding that the state's act threatens such immediate danger to the moral basis of the life of the community, that all other purposes must be made subordinate to its overthrow. That is, we may grant, an extreme. But that it exists—and exists compatibly with the general obligation to conform—is not to be doubted. Resistance to the claims of the actual may be, though it rarely is, the highest way of service to the ideal.

¹ Cf. especially the case in which the state is not a true nation-state, i.e. where membership of a particular political organization is externally imposed, not willingly accepted by a section of the community. Cf. p. 159 below.

III.—PROBLEMS ARISING IN CONNECTION WITH THE STATE : (a) NATIONALISM

We have been led thus to assign to the state a place and function in our social organization of peculiar importance. It is the representative of the broader and more general moral interest of the community ; and as such, in the adjusting of the relations of groups and institutions within its borders, it claims and exercises a priority, so that normally the duty of these institutions is to stand by the state's decision. But if this be taken as giving a line of solution for certain conflicts, it leaves us with others which appear only to be aggravated by it. What is to be said of the conflict between a dissident group within a state, which holds that the authority of that state is wrongfully imposed on them, and claims the right to secede from it ? And what, again, is to be said of conflicts between states themselves ? The typical case of the first problem is that of a " Nationalist " movement. The second is the crux of the general problem of inter-state or international relations. We may take these points in order. The discussion of them will throw some further light on the nature of the state.

(1) *Meaning of a " Nation."*

In ordinary discourse, we are apt to use almost interchangeably the terms " state " and " nation." But this usage is not quite accurate. A " nation " and a " state " are two different things, which do not always coincide, though it is true—and it may partially excuse our habit of speech—that the typical state, in the sense in which we have used the term, is also a " nation-state."

The difference between them may be expressed by saying that a state is an institutional fact, and a nation

a psychological fact. Wherever a certain definite territory is brought under a single political organization, so that within its boundaries the supreme political authority is vested in one body, and so that, towards all similar political organizations in the world, it acts as a unit, there we have a state. Statehood implies the existence of common governmental institutions over a specific area. A nation, on the other hand, is a body of people, of sufficient size and permanence, who, whether or not they are members of the same state, feel themselves to belong to one another in a way in which they do not belong to others. They are conscious that in some sense they are spiritual kindred, and different from others, so that they find it easy and natural to understand one another, and in some things want to act together; whereas towards others, their feelings are less warm and intimate. Nationality thus is a sentiment—a persistent emotional attitude towards a particular group of people, and their common interests and concerns, so that one shares in the experience of that group with peculiar keenness, and responds more readily to the call of its necessities.

Now that sentiment may exist in very different degrees; and it may arise on very various conditions. Some have supposed it to be mainly a matter of common racial origins. That, of course, may be a cause or a strongly favourable condition. But it is by no means a sole cause. Almost any experience which has somehow come to be felt and shared with special intensity by a group of people may serve as the basis for their national feeling. It may be community of language and of literature, or of religion, or of economic interest, or of political outlook. Most often it is that some pressure of circumstances compelled them to act as a unit, made them for a time more or less of a state, and the experi-

ence and memory of that action has consolidated the common institutions and given them a hold on the loyalty of the group. Any of these conditions is itself almost sufficient to initiate the growth of a national sentiment. Once begun, it adds other strands to its strength; and in the course of a few generations, it becomes a firm and enduring though "not immutable bond.

Statehood and nationality, then, are different conceptions. There are states which are not nations; and nations which are not states. But it is inherent in the nature of both that they should tend to coincide. A national consciousness demands self-expression in political institutions visibly its own. It seeks to become not necessarily completely, but in some measure, a state—the inner spirit clothing itself in outward and bodily form. And a state must aim at winning for itself not merely obedience but the loyalty and devotion of its members, i.e. at creating, within itself, the sentiment of nationality. Where that is lacking, on the part even of a section of the community, the state's action is hampered and restricted. Much of its energy is consumed in the mere maintenance of its physical unity—almost inevitably by measures of repression. Its life is unstable, and liable to the threat of internal disruption, for the basis of its existence as a moral institution is contradicted by the facts of its own relation to its citizens.

(ii) *The Relations of Nations and States.*

Nations, therefore, demand to be states: and states seek to become nations. And one important end of statesmanship is to induce the concurrence of the two conditions. But it is not to be supposed that the existence of a national consciousness and of the desire

for separate statehood is in itself a sufficient foundation of a state's life. Other conditions must also be satisfied. The group must inhabit a territory of a certain size and compactness, and it must command the resources, both material and moral, on which to support the responsibilities and burden of a separate political existence. And it is because, in many parts of the world, different nationalities are to be found in the same area, so that no clear geographical division is possible between them : and because in other cases, where such division is easy, some other essential condition of statehood is lacking, that the problem of adjusting the claims to recognition as distinct political entities is one of great complexity and difficulty. It would indeed be insoluble were it not that it is possible within the unity of a single state to provide some and often a satisfactory form of expression for different national consciousnesses. Thus Great Britain itself contains at least three genuinely distinct nationalities. Each of these three has its own characteristic national memories, traditions and point of view. Each has some institutions peculiar to itself ; and does not wish to lose its identity or to be wholly absorbed in the greater unit. But these strong national feelings are not exclusive of—on the contrary they have proved to be entirely compatible with—loyalty to the wider political organization.

But the case is instructive. For the secret of the solidity of the state of Great Britain is that on the whole the Union was peacefully accomplished. It did not rest on the military domination of one part over the others : and what the far-sighted and forceful policy of Edward I failed to secure, community of interest and of speech, aided by a fortunate dynastic happening, enduringly effected. The political union is founded upon and expresses an authentic unity of sentiment, and a respect

and toleration by each part of what is distinctive in the life of the other. The same lesson is written across the history of the British Empire, and indeed across the history of every considerable state or Empire since the Roman dominion.

Two general conclusions appear to follow from this brief discussion. The first is that nationality is a fact of high ethical importance. States exist to guard and to enhance the finer things in our human civilization: and for the most part it is true that these things—a just social order, beauty in all its forms, the energetic search for truth, the wide diffusion of intelligence and joy—are fruits of a national culture. They are not merely national, either in origin or in influence. Great creative work in any sphere depends upon and gathers together the achievement of many cultures. Nevertheless, it is broadly true that the great works of the human spirit, especially in the region of art, have been wrought in an environment of a harmonious and pervasive national consciousness, and bear the marks of the rich experience of which they are the expression and consummation.¹

And in the second place, significant as is this element of nationality, it is not by itself decisive as to the merits of any particular claim to statehood. We have noted that other conditions than that of the existence of a national sentiment must be satisfied. But apart from this, we shall see that in our modern world it is more necessary to extend than to contract the range of unified political institutions. One grave defect of our existing

¹ Even the obvious exceptions go some way to prove the rule. Dante, e.g., was conscious of Italy. And perhaps it is not fanciful to suggest that the state-less condition of the Jewish community is reflected in the comparative meagreness of their contribution to art and literature as contrasted with their achievement in the more universal spheres of science and philosophy.

order is its failure to give adequate outward embodiment to the wider moral relationships which exist not simply between fellow members of one state, but between fellow members of the whole human family, with all its varied interests. To remedy that defect would seem to require the organization of larger areas as political units, aiming ultimately at an organization inclusive of all mankind. Nevertheless it is obvious that these wider organizations cannot rest upon a suppression of the differences of national outlook and sentiment which may be found in their several parts. These must find room and appropriate recognition within the unity of the whole. Many of the greater states of the world have already had to face, on scales of varying magnitude, problems of the same kind; and the constitutional expedients which they have devised afford guidance for the solution of the problems which remain. And, on the other hand, it is clear that the process of building these wider political units is conditioned by the discovery or the creation of wider areas of moral agreement. Stable political institutions rest upon community of will. Our position is not improved, hardly even changed, by the provision of a common governmental apparatus, unless that expresses and gives effect to a certain unanimity of idea and purpose. The task of the future, therefore, is twofold. We must recognize differences in the minds of communities, not only that they exist but that they are necessary to the fullness of human civilization: and yet in and through these differences we must elicit a fundamental unity of aim and principle, an agreement as to the primary values of life, and as to the conditions of their attainment. Here and here only is the way of reconciliation of our wider and narrower political loyalties.

III.—(b) INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

These last remarks have an obvious bearing on our second problem—that of international relations. We are here concerned not so much with the great and growing field of the material and moral commerce between states, but with the special question of the adjustment of differences between states. On this matter, we can have, and until very recently could have had, no recourse to an authoritative organ of settlement such as the state itself is for disputes which arise within its borders. States, we have held, discharge that function as the embodiments of a more or less definite unity of moral opinion. It falls to them to render that opinion articulate and effective in the management of the organized expression of various sides of human interest and activity. The fabric and policy of the state thus form a framework within which other institutions find support and guidance, and which helps to settle in some considerable detail their mutual rights and duties.

But states are territorially limited: and it is clear that not all inter-group conflicts fall within the boundaries covered by state organizations. Conflicts may arise between an institution which does so fall within the limits of a state, and one which does not: or between an institution of the latter kind and a state as such: or between two states. And in those situations there is no outer order of established moral opinion and practice to which an appeal can be made—or at least none at all comparable to the state in stability and effectiveness. Conflicts in this sphere, therefore, present a far less tractable problem. We have seen that in general conflicts arise from the defective moral organization of our social world: and here, it seems, we encounter the most startling and serious defect of all.

For, while by means of the state, the formal organization of civilization has succeeded in giving a modestly effective external embodiment to the moral relations existing within particular areas, it has only just begun the task of creating a corresponding expression to the relations which transcend these limits.

We may consider here only one and perhaps the crucial case of conflicts which arise within this disorganized world—the case of conflicts between states. States, we have noted, seem to stand to one another, not as two elements within a single system, differentiated and complementary organs of the whole, but as two relatively complete individualities sustaining each its own life and purposes. They thus confront one another apparently without the guidance afforded by membership in a common society in which their relations to and claims upon one another are defined and interpreted. *Prima facie*, the conflict is one between two moral systems, each more or less complete in itself, and bent on its own maintenance, neither recognizing a wider moral order to which both belong. How then is that conflict to be resolved? Is it possible to speak of a duty of a state to seek a solution? And if so, is there any clue to the line of solution which it ought to seek?

Now if this first appearance were the whole truth of the situation, it would be difficult to speak seriously of the “duty” of one state to another. The “duty” of each would be to uphold its own point of view, since that would be, for it, ultimate. A peaceful solution of conflict would be reached only as a matter of convenience and accident—the essential necessities of the situation would almost compel a resort to force. And just because of the failure of civilization to achieve a really comprehensive moral organization, this first appearance is sufficiently true to make it certain that

the moral obligations of states must be regarded at least in detail, if not in principle, as involving considerations different from those which arise in individual action. But it is certainly not the whole truth. Moral relations are not co-terminous with states. The moral ideal, the Kingdom, has no limitations of frontiers: and the final loyalty of any moral agent can be due to nothing else than the ideal. We have admitted, from this point of view, the grave defectiveness of our actual world. There the extent of the moral ideal, if we may put it so, is less visible than, in some respects at least, its content. But ultimately these two aspects are not to be severed from one another. The content demands universality of application: and is denied it only at the cost of self-contradiction and frustration. The state overthrows its own title to recognition as a moral agent and as a repository of moral obligation if it claims that in principle it is other than an element in and instrument of a wider moral order.

And in actual fact, we do less than justice to our imperfect world if we hold that that wider moral order is merely ideal. It has some footing, tenuous though it may be, in the world of time and space and human events. There is a body of international law; there is a wider body of international moral opinion not yet focussed into law: there are in the League of Nations the beginnings of international legislative administrative and juridical institutions—the outline of an international “state.” Admittedly none of these things has behind it the powerful sanctions which attach to the corresponding elements in a national state. Their hold on the world is less secure. But they are partial embodiments of the universality of the moral ideal: and they serve to define some of the obligations of states as members of a wider Kingdom.

It follows, then, that we are right to speak of the duties of states, and to hold that their relations with one another are subject to moral considerations. Can we then prescribe a principle for the solution of conflicts? None, we think, other than this—that states, like individuals, in loyalty to that conception of the Kingdom which they profess, and which is the basis of their own existence as moral institutions, must seek to make every situation yield as much for and towards that Kingdom as can be won from it. That, of course, is a very formal and general principle. Its concrete and detailed application is the business of the practical moral intelligence. But even this bare statement may carry us further than at first sight it seems to promise.

For the Kingdom, as we have seen, is a many-sided life. No one state, therefore, is likely to represent adequately all the elements of that ideal, and the achievement of each has to be filled out and enlarged by that of others. Hence the primary necessity is that every community should have room and opportunity to develop to the full extent of its powers its own contribution to civilization: and that through friendly contact with one another, by mutual borrowing and lending, all states may enrich their own experience, and the whole grow towards a more complete and at the same time a more harmonious life. Peaceful co-operation is a condition of such a growth—the condition under which all may share, in their several degrees, in the best things of human life.¹

Difficulties in the relations of states may, but seldom do, spring from the incompatibility either of their views as to the nature of the human good, or of their several contributions thereto. Nations quarrel not about the good, but about the conditions of good. For the

¹ Cf. Mr. C. Delisle Burns's essay, *A Short History of International Intercourse*.

civilization of each state necessarily rests upon a certain material foundation ; and states are prone to advance claims on behalf of that foundation which are not easily adjustable to the similar claims of others. Each desires to make certain territorial and economic arrangements which will more adequately support its civilization : and as its civilization develops, these claims are apt to enlarge. It is there that conflicts arise : and under existing arrangements are bound constantly to arise. For apart from the natural propensity of States to exaggerate their own needs, and to make excessive demands, it is clear that, from time to time, adjustments in the distribution of the world's material resources as between the existing different states are genuinely necessary. One state needs more than it has ; another cannot properly use all that it controls. Yet because redistribution involves apparent loss to one state and gain to another, it is hard to accomplish. And in the main, it is true that the only instrument which mankind has hitherto devised to bring about these adjustments is the instrument of war. Now the defect of that instrument is not merely its terrible costliness, but its inefficiency. War is a suspension of moral relations between states, and an appeal to the almost wholly irrelevant tribunal of simple force. It creates, therefore, conditions under which a reasonable solution of the cause of the conflict is all but unattainable : and it tends to destroy, in the life of a state, those very elements which justify its claim to the resources which it seeks.

If, then, this analysis of the causes of inter-state conflicts is accurate, it is not hard to see the direction of the primary duty of states. States, we have seen, exist in order to realize the greatest possible development in the world of the finer things of civilization : and an essential means thereto is the peaceful attainment of

reasonably grounded adjustments of the material conditions of the life of nations. That implies that a state has no right to the standpoint of "sacro egoismo."¹ On the contrary, it must strive to see in other states the bearers of true human values, to respect the values which are there realized, and to appreciate the material requirements of the maintenance of these values.

And if we are asked to translate this duty into terms of "practical politics," we may reply that two things at least are involved. The first is that states should aim at a much greater equality of access on the part of all states to the material resources of the world. The mapping out especially of the less developed parts of the world into exclusive spheres of economic influence, is as morally indefensible as it is ultimately politically disastrous. And in the second place, it is obvious that where acute differences arise between states the prospect of an intelligent settlement is vastly greater when it is possible to bring to bear upon them not only the judgment of the two interested states, but the broader and less partial judgment of a wider community. We need not contend that that wider judgment is always right—just as we need not argue that as between two individuals, an appeal to a Court of Law produces always an equitable decision, or that in an industrial dispute, a Conciliation Board always finds the just solution. But of the greater trustworthiness of that broader judgment in general, there is surely no question, or of its superi-

¹ Or, if we like to put it so, it means that its "egoismo" should be really "sacro," consecrated to the highest and most enduring ends of human life. If it is so, its devotion to its own welfare will include a regard for the conditions of welfare in others. As Plato saw, the healthy state, the state which aims at true excellence of human life, is pacific. Nothing which is said above contradicts the fundamental truth that the best thing a state can do for the world is to make its own life as perfect as it may be—to eliminate injustice and social oppression, and to give room for the full development of the fruits of the Spirit.

ority to the one-sided settlement that follows a trial of armed strength. Hence there is a duty upon states to support in all such issues and in every possible way, the reference to those international institutions which are the incipient embodiments of a world-wide moral order.¹

These are not small demands: though acceptance of them is the centre of a moral and of a pacific policy. Yet it remains that even a state disposed fully to accept them may still in the existing condition of the world have the duty of resort to war. When all possibilities of peaceful settlement have been exhausted, a state may find itself faced with a forcible demand to surrender, with, in its view, no gain to the general interests of the world, some condition which it takes to be essential to its life: or it may be called upon to counter some action which threatens the moral basis of civilization. In such cases, that there may be a duty to resist by force, can hardly be doubted. As to when, in particular, such a duty arises, once more there is no *a priori* rule of decision. A state may well concede much for the sake of the general obligation to peace, and to give room and time for the forces of reason to operate—more than on the strict merits of the case it thinks itself justified in doing. But how much only an understanding of the elements of any given situation can judge. And these elements may be very complex. The main principle of a state's obligation we have seen to be similar to that of the individual. But the circumstances of the action of each are very different, and the determination of it more difficult. The issues of national action are greater, the calculation of probable

¹ It is worth while noting, as showing the bearing of these two points on one another, that one of the principles prescribed in Art. 22 of the Covenant of the League is that in territories administered under a Mandate of the League, "equal opportunities for trade and commerce" are to be secured to all members of the League.

results less certain, and the system within which it takes place much less stable. The individual acts within a framework of laws, institutions and opinions of whose persistence he is assured, and on which he can rely to correct and control the consequences of his action, whatever it be. But the state's action may overthrow the whole existing fabric of international institutions, and leave almost nothing standing to direct the results of its action. Again, every serious good to which the individual is devoted, and for the sake of which he acts, is shared by many others : and the maintenance of that good depends on no one person. If he falls out, he knows that others remain to carry on his work, and to see that the good for which he strove is incorporated in the tradition of his society. But the case may be very different with the state. It may have, in relation to some good, a far higher degree of individual responsibility than can fall upon any one of its citizens. A man, therefore, may rightly hazard his life more freely than the state may its life. It has been argued¹ indeed that the very willingness of a state to sacrifice itself, implying its attainment of a high level of ethical life, is itself a presumption against the rightness of its doing so in any particular case. No doubt the same suggestion might be brought to bear upon the problem of individual self-sacrifice : but it is patently more relevant and important in the case of the state.

Every particular decision of the state, therefore, involves considerations of great complexity and uncertainty. It is perhaps the severest of the problems set to man's moral intelligence : nowhere does he run greater risks, or stake more on the truth of his insight. But whatever the difficulties in detail, it is clear that the principle of the solution of conflicts for the state, as

¹ By Mr. F. H. Bradley.

for the individual and all other moral personalities, lies in fidelity to the point of view of the whole, in recognition of the paramount claims of the Kingdom, of the moral ideal.

IV.—THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The discussion of the two problems² of Nationalism and International Relations has brought us to the same issue. Both alike point to the necessity for the creation of institutions expressive of the moral relationships which unquestionably hold (though they are not always recognized) over the whole of mankind, and of such measure of common moral opinion as can be found there to exist. And therein lies the ethical importance of that recent experiment in political organization which we call the League of Nations. It represents the first attempt of modern civilization to give institutional form to the conception of a world-wide moral community. It shows mankind reaching out to a truer conception of the universality of moral relations. And whatever its defects, whatever the weakness of its present structure, it marks a step in the forward movement of civilization which cannot permanently be undone.

We have already noted that the existence of the League decisively changes the environment in which states have to determine their obligations to one another—and imposes upon every state which claims to be a moral personality the new and specific duty to have resort to (and thus strengthen) some such international instrument, for guidance in the forming of its policy. There is no need here to explain in detail the occasions and procedure of reference to the League, or the powers entrusted to it or the machinery by which it has to discharge its function. It is sufficient to observe simply that the League both in its strength and in its weakness

illustrates the contention of our previous paragraphs. The League exists at all only because there is a certain unanimity of will among its members. They are agreed at least that peace is better than war; and that it is worth while to aim at the peaceful settlement of disputes. In so far as there is a genuine will to peace, the League is strong. It is weak, because there is still too little understanding of the true ends of peace and civilization, and too little agreement as to the conditions on which these can be realized. Nations are not prepared to trust their causes to the judgment of a mind of whose kinship with their own they are not yet assured.

Hence the limits imposed upon the League are dictated by the limits of the common purpose which has, so far, gone to its making. That purpose is as yet mainly negative—to avoid war rather than to promote the goods and activities of peace: and formally, against a threat of war the League can do little more than interpose a period of delay. But the power of the League will grow just as out of their co-operation for this limited end nations work their way to greater community of mind, and come to perceive the extent to which they share other and more positive and expansive ideals. The enmities of the past still obscure for us the measure of community of mind which exists even now. Western civilization, at least, is a single thing, rooted in the same historic sources, sharing its highest achievements, and to a considerable degree looking to the same ends. It is one great function of the League, within the framework of the duties assigned to it, to develop and to make explicit this consciousness of a common aim and destiny: and in the end to bring within it all the peoples of the world.

And here is revealed the importance of what are sometimes regarded as the secondary functions of the League—its trusteeship for mandated areas, its humani-

tarian and scientific work, its effort to raise standards of working conditions in the more backward industrial countries of the earth. It is true that in one aspect these are subordinate functions. The business of the League which is first in the minds of men is the peaceful settlement of disputes. But the discharge of that function, as we have seen, even by the national state, requires that the state be inspired and supported by a certain unanimity of moral opinion. And that grows with exercise in whatever sphere it finds application. The same rule holds of the new international institutions. They too must seize upon and give practice to whatever positive moral opinion exists among the nations of mankind. And to this end, these varied activities which have been committed to the League furnish the occasion. They offer fields in which it can constructively apply an accepted set of moral principles: and by so doing establish these principles more firmly in the thought and practice of its member-states. By these means it can and does accomplish certain goods and eliminate certain evils in relation to those for whom it is responsible. And by bringing these matters under common control, it diminishes the occasions and possibilities of conflict. But important as these results are, they are perhaps less significant than the experience which the several states are gaining in co-operative effort towards the establishment of a world order based on principles of social justice. Their conception of justice may still be defective: and the range of its application narrowly enough circumscribed. But at least there is recognition of the sovereignty of moral principles, and of the common duty of all states to assist in their realization. That is a momentous gain, and a promise of the ultimate, if distant, achievement of the moral unity of mankind.

CHAPTER IX

THE FAMILY

ERICA LINDSAY

LOOKING sometimes in a rounded mirror we seem to find in the reflected scene a certain completeness of beauty, a tranquil concentration, which we recognize as that which we have been looking for in the everyday world and have found hard to find. And in the family at its best we sometimes see the harmonious diversity in unity, the sense of brotherhood and sonship, love powerful and power loving, the intermingling of giving and receiving, of labour and of enjoyment, of self-realization and self-forgetfulness, of independence and interdependence—all those things which the big human family has vaguely and fitfully in view and goes on blunderingly in search of, taking many bypaths and falling into many sloughs of despond.

The image in the mirror is dependent on the outside world and the family is in innumerable subtle ways dependent on the society of which it is a part. We may well find in families a degree of attainment of ideals in advance of society ; but the family even in so far as it *can* live in isolation does so at its peril : it cannot but receive and it needs must give. Christianity which proclaimed the brotherhood of men exacted a price : that no longer could some call others barbarians, that light could no longer be sheltered and shine to itself

but must shine in the darkness. The feast offered was one to which we must *compel* others to come in. We all know the limitations and the blind arrogance of the self-sufficient family. The Gospels brought to individual men a message of a life that grew and became enriched through a denial and a renunciation of the exclusiveness that had before seemed a safeguard of possession and enjoyment. If this were a universe of fundamental antagonisms and contradictions, realization of the infinitesimal and incomplete character of the human atom over against the whole great scheme of present, past and future, would be inconceivably terrible. Christ believed in fundamental agreement and love, and offered to the individual soul, in exchange for its finite bounded happening, participation in a continuous and ever-living reality, a life which was far greater as a conscious part than it had ever been with its false consciousness of isolated unity. He was universalizing and illuminating an idea which was in some degree implicit in every human group or family.

The family as an institution we have taken so much for granted that we seldom consider what an achievement it is and how worthy of better uses than that to which we often put it. We might well ponder the fact that mankind, however rarely, does at times through the family realize a life in which there is the true equality of each giving what they can and receiving what they need, where women, so to put it, "walk in public procession in the streets the same as the men," where a child is sure of care, be it strong or weak, where a parent values a child not for what he will get out of him but for what that child will go on to be and do in life, in which the harmony of wills and desires supersedes force and eliminates strife, in which the partial achievements and failures of age can in their passing

contribute to life because age is in touch with youth and the hearts of the fathers are turned to the children and of the children to their fathers.

Our modern attitude to the family, however, is comparable at times to that of Euthyphro to his father in Plato's dialogue. We arraign it for its shortcomings with a sublime oblivion of our own family origin, or as though we were content that the human race should end, if it did not begin, with us. To what if to any extent the continuance of the human race should in itself absorb or direct the conscious efforts and energies of man is a subject more profound and difficult than it is necessary to consider here. It would open wide fields of speculation to set, for instance, the old Jewish conviction that "seed must be raised up" to a man that went along with unfaltering wholesale slaughters, over against the modern sense of the sacredness of existing life that goes along with much misdoubt of and desire circumspectly to regulate life's increase.

But here it is rather to the point to maintain a proposition, for most thinking minds non-controversial, that as long as we use and enjoy or value in any way our part and lot in the human family, there must always be for us a responsibility to acknowledge the sacredness of the origin and continuity of human life.

From great teachers and inspired prophets there comes to us a continual redirection of our energies and activities. Our unenlightened minds wander among the fringes and by-paths of life's meanings and life's problems, but the inspiration of the saint and the genius shows itself in this, that they see and make us see significance where before we have looked for none. And so man has been led on from innumerable forms of polygamy and polyandry, from the old dim fearful longings for offspring to tend the grave of the departed,

from a blind half-conscious sense of the necessities imposed on man if the race of men were to comprehend and fulfil its destiny that showed itself in that old longing for "seed to be raised up as the grains of the sand for multitude," from the Greek pursuit of culture and of art that prized companionship and the society of men rather than family life, despised women, and lightly regarded the exposure of children. With the dawn of the life and gospel of Christ it seemed that not only did each individual soul acquire a new meaning and value, but the individual group, man, woman and dependent child, shone out with a promise of infinite possibilities and drew to it the mind and imaginations of mankind. The star in the east which led the wise men to where the young child lay transfigured for men and women of all creeds that sense of the sacredness of birth, of renewal of life and promise, bringing a perception that in the family group we might find a vital truth set forth as it were in terms the most easily comprehensible to the heart and mind of man. The equality of Christ's attitude to men and women, his regard for children, his conception of the human beings round him as part of a family the fatherhood of which embraced the lilies of the field and the sparrows that were sold for a farthing, was a part of the revelation that dawned on the disciples, that inspired the writers of the Gospel story of the Nativity, and that later gave the world those radiant "Holy Families" that helped to make holy each human family that love brought into being. A nursing sister, after thirty years of work, still vividly remembered one of her earliest experiences when, in a poverty-stricken district near Waterloo Bridge, having seen a woman through her first confinement in the night, she had come back the next morning to find the young mother and the young father with the newborn

babe between them lying all three asleep together, and it seemed as if she had entered a holy place.

In what special ways can the family help us to prepare ourselves for life in the world and for everlasting life, for a realization of that in ourselves which is the key to our relation to a present that grows out of the past and leads to the future ?

For one thing the small group of closely related people with a heritage of common tradition is like a carefully prepared bed from which stones and thorns are removed, and in which therefore the young ideals of man can grow to a certain strength before being planted out in a rougher world. It is a place where we live less by precept than by example, where doctrine is not abstracted from life, where power uncontrolled by love is quickly known as hateful and evil.

Possession within the family is clearly a concession, a gift, but a concession freely made and enjoyed with the assurance that the enjoyment of it gives joy. Abuse of this concession, greed and covetousness, are quickly felt as evil and soon bring their own punishment of isolation ; and though daily bread is a constant family concern, yet an over-preoccupation with the means of life or an extravagant and callous expenditure of means quickly brings a degradation of family life.

Young life in the family passes quickly from one phase to another, is always demanding fresh activities, new regulations, different modes of expression, and yet, through them all, is so obviously reaching after a continuous realization of one coherent impulse that a family that enjoys and loves but does not sentimentalize always has practice in recognizing the one that remains among the many that change and pass, in seeing that the value of usage and form is temporal and yet related to what endures, in seeing that life is impossible without

the way and that yet the way is not the life. Denial of this truth brings retaliation in its train. The clinging to baby ways when they are outgrown, the keeping up of forms and usages, not because they fit the present but because they were enjoyed in the past, becomes ridiculous and burdensome; and the undue repression of independence of thought or action, as the age of responsibility dawns, leads to friction and discord, that are only removed by a wide and active spirit of toleration.

In the family the miracle is continually occurring under our eyes of a diversity of gifts and contributions, diversity both as to character and quantity, going to make up one live and coherent whole; a miracle which, where the wider world is concerned, can be produced by no amount of machinery or organization, if something of the comradeship, the mutual respect and trust of the family is not present.

The intimacy and continuity of family life successfully bring us down to the bedrock of religion, to that core of our religion which really supports us in trial and illuminates us in joy. What we really like, what we really care to be in agreement with, what our character lends weight to, these will make the atmosphere of the home. And less obviously, though not less surely, they will help to make the atmosphere of the wider world into which we move. If we learn to note in the family the power for good and ill of the character of each and its effect on the welfare of all, it will be less easy to go out into the world, thinking that as far as the world is concerned, our character and temper do not matter so long as we keep the rules of the world's game.

In the well-regulated and happy family punishment is never vindictive nor an explosion of undisciplined and arrogant power, but the expression of understanding, care for and belief in both the individual and the group

to which the individual owes allegiance. Children who grow up uncorrupted by stupid and vindictive punishment on going out into the world will be an influence on the side of humanity and sanity in the use of punishment by the state.

We can learn too in the family the sacredness of common things. Its joys and sorrows are so bound up with the most universal happenings, "Love, and Death and Birth," the common meal, the daily doings and needs of childhood. If we learn in the family, as we may well do, that there is no limit to the depth and width of these experiences, and that they are enhanced and not diminished by sympathy with and understanding of the experiences of others, we shall go out into the world prepared to find a joy that can be "in widest commonalty spread."

Education in the more conscious and technical sense cannot be touched on in the limits of this chapter. But consideration of what the family is and may be shows that education of a more or less unconscious kind proceeds from the very nature and being of a family. The strength and character of the child's mind will develop in accordance with the character of family life and outlook just as its body will develop according to food and air and physical surroundings. "People talk to you a great deal about your education," says Alyosha to the boys in *The Brothers Karamazov*, "but some good sacred memory, preserved from childhood, is perhaps the best education. If a man carries many such memories with him into life, he is safe to the end of his days, and if one has only one good memory left in one's heart, even that may sometimes be the means of saving us." And because the influence of family life is so potent there is one consideration that it seems specially important to bear in mind at the present time. A

great many men and women have broken away from set creeds and observances not because they are irreligious but from a sense of the need of reconstruction and restatement. Many have followed this lead from no particular conviction but from the same sheep-like instinct that before kept them in the churches.

A result of this temporary loss of accepted forms through which to express acknowledgment of a reality and significance lying behind the world of appearances seems to have been to some extent that unacknowledged they have been unremembered. We have been approaching the penury of a life when things are known only at their face value and in which we become incapable of appreciating anything else about them.

We surely do not wish our children to grow up content with any such impoverished existence, and there is no necessity even in this period of change and adaptation that they should do so. Even if we cannot accept a particular creed or conform to a particular church yet none the less, when we consider, we know that every act of every day, every human relationship, implies reliance upon an order and continuity and a power which things taken at their face value could never reveal. We are living on a heritage of faith, a capital accumulated by those who cared to seek significances and meanings. If we do not want to become spiritually bankrupt we must put the capital to such active use as shall increase our spiritual income.

Our children then may have to reformulate their faith in and to realize afresh their relation to the unseen, but they need not therefore grow up with no development of the sense by which this can be perceived.

They can, for instance, be helped in simple ways to understand and appreciate the service and the faithfulness that are implied in the safety and care which they

and we enjoy and which rest on something above and beyond what law and regulations could of themselves produce ; they can be taught that true courtesy is not a personal ornament, to be worn like a feather or a jewel, but is a necessary condition of mutual understanding and service for all, old and young. Froebel's parable of the unseen wind that yet makes motion that a child can see, may be taken as typical of the teaching required.

Again, if we have regard to implications and significances as well as to surface appearances in our everyday world we shall not light-heartedly let our children come up against forms or representations of life that in so far as they have content have a content that is debased. We cannot excuse ourselves by a plea of unreality for letting children find their amusement in the distortions and vulgarities of bad films and children's comic papers. The sceptical discrimination possible to the grown-up in regard to such things is not to be expected of the child. To induce in the child's mind a familiarity with the forms of what is violent, ugly, debased leads to a double evil. The mind grown familiar with such forms empty of real content, when it comes face to face with evil in life is not, as it should be, at once alarmed and repelled by the very appearance of evil. Again, the child being by nature imitative to a high degree, wants to rehearse and live over again in imagination all it sees—it is in a sense practising various forms of life for future use. When we consider this, how monstrous it seems wilfully to set before the child models of what life should never be, instead of leading it to fair pastures.

It may well be that we provide for children too little that is wholesomely humorous. Lives that are rushed and jaded do not lend themselves to fun and good sport. But we cannot make up this deficiency by cheap

and easy methods without deterioration of the minds and lives of the children.

We have been considering the family as it appears in its most successful and stable form. We have recognized that that form has had to be achieved and it can only be maintained by a constant reachievement, by a continual solution of new problems and difficulties which changes in society necessitate in any human institution.

If the value of our ideals lies in their being dynamic and revolutionary, we must be prepared for the ideal of the family to grow and change. We have got to prepare for a future as well as to make the most of the present. In the present time of change and unrest we must largely concentrate on how to stabilize and use the present. But changes are in actual process of taking place. About some controversy rages and much doubt and even distress are prevalent, and it is difficult to act effectively until we come to some kind of working conclusion about them.

I should like to touch on four such problems, not all equally controversial or important: (1) *Parental Control*; (2) *Peace and Privacy of Family Life*; (3) *Divorce*; and (4) *Birth-control*. Not because I have in my mind any set solutions of these questions, but with a view to suggesting that we individuals may be helped to be more wise in our approach towards such problems and in our criticism of some current theories by remembering some of the principles underlying the wisdom and inspiration of the Gospel.

One characteristic of Christ's attitude towards the problems of his day, towards changes and advances that were overdue, was that it was positive and never merely negative. He wanted life to be more abundant, and he came not to destroy but to fulfil. The deficiencies

and inconsistencies of the law and the prophets were not his first concern. What moved him was his sense of their truth and his understanding of it as something living and growing and only to be made explicit in a living and growing world. His conception involved belief in God, an infinite trust that in God is found the unity and reality of present, past and future. In the sinner and in the sick he saw less the sin and the sickness than the impulse and the health that had gone astray, just as in the law he saw not only the inadequacy but the embryo truth. Now, in our revolts from and judgments upon human institutions we ordinary men and women are apt to have little clear or secure hold upon the real value embodied in the institution we criticize. If we want to be constructive and not merely destructive, we must be able to judge whether the value that gave meaning to the old is enhanced or made more secure by our changes, changes which we often make from mere weariness of creaking joints or irksome friction, not from the deeper spiritual understanding which gives power such as Christ's to imagine fitter forms that more nearly express a life that is growing and increasing.

(1) *Parental Control.*

A revolt against the old convention of the infallibility and exclusive privileges and rights of the parent was inevitable and right; but the revolt went along lines dictated by broodings on the intolerableness of the existing form of constraint rather than by vision of an authority more justly conceived and more rightly revered. A see-saw from the control of self-satisfied age to that of self-satisfied youth would leave the world very much where it had been. For *unless above himself he can erect himself, how poor a thing is Man*, whether

he be old or young or middle-aged. The real advance comes when the authority of experience and responsibility that rightly belongs to the parent is not magnified into a monstrous personal infallibility or superiority, when the child sees that the parent not only exercises but acknowledges authority, and when the parent in exacting obedience looks forward to the day when the responsible independence of the man will replace it.

We have suffered lately from the combined effects of the state of flux existing in the convictions and the habits of the parent and of the reaction towards a fear of "imposing" upon the child even such convictions and habits as we have. Parents have often done wrong to the child by dogmatic assertions of their own views as though these were the gospel once for all proclaimed, but they wrong the child in another way if because they cannot see the truth clear-cut and plain they fail to express and stand by the truth as they see it. A child, however vaguely and indistinctly, can realize that convictions that grown-up people are ready themselves to abide by and suffer for are not the self-willed fancies of a selfish tyranny but are rooted in regard for and trust in experience. And if the grown-ups are truthful and generous in making as plain as they can the experience on which their principles rest, and if they also respect the experience and outlook of the child, the maintaining of their convictions is not likely to lead to bitterness or weakening constraint. We none of us dream of being able to do without the experience of the past, and that being so we must each be prepared to take our own minute part in handing it safely on.

(2) *The Peace and Privacy of Family Life.*

The privacy of the family is assailed in many indirect ways to-day. The increased coming and going,

the launching out of daughters as well as sons into the world, the disinclination of modern parents to settle down into vegetative middle-age, all have a tendency to make family life less stable and more public. In deciding how far we accept this tendency and how far we should stand out against it, we must ask ourselves what the old privacy and comparative immobility gave, whether they were the result of inertia or of a Podsnapian self-satisfaction and sufficiency, or whether they corresponded to the quiet sleep by the seed in earth, giving time and rest for our powers to germinate: whether through the increased activity and intercourse we can still conserve individual steadiness and reliability; whether the character of life is being made more significant by its complications or merely more fantastic and bizarre. Anyway it is well to bear in mind that the opening out in the world of to-day of a hundred possibilities in the place of one may prove a blessing if it means that the individual makes choice of the activity that he can best use and enjoy instead of being possibly tied down to uncongenial work for which he is really unsuited; but that it can prove a curse if the individual is tempted to try to pursue all the hundred possibilities at once. Such an attempt leads to a restlessness and superficiality most unpropitious to family life. It is a good sturdy human instinct to wish to make sure that our "submissiveness is choice," but we must submit to choose all the same, "lest, seeking much we may not use, that which we love indeed we lose."

One particular form in which this problem presents itself concerns the parent particularly.

There is a comradeship of spirit as between old and young that can never stale or be superfluous, but this is often more hindered than helped by the habit of dispensing with all outward differentiation of dress, habit

and amusement as between old and young. Let age by all means be active, but that advancing years should bring no change with them is a sign of arrested development. It is as sad for fifty to be like twenty as for twenty to be like two, and it seems to me that those friends of the youth of to-day have right who attribute some of the irritation of children against parents to a half-conscious resentment against beholding in the parent a mockery of themselves. The family and society need some peace of Age at the heart of the natural agitations of Youth.

And it concerns all of us, old and young, in our decisions as to the conduct of family life to remember that though our application of *render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's* may make us give up to public concerns a great deal of the time and energy we should like to withhold for private use, it need not make us live that part of our life that is rightly individual and particular in the limelight of publicity.

(3) *Divorce.*

The sacredness of the marriage tie is held by some to be so fundamental a foundation for family and national life that they oppose any movement towards making the law of divorce less rigid and more equitable. They think that it is evil enough that the rich can find ways to leap the narrow fence of the law and that to lessen restraint in any way would but add evil to evil.

Certainly since on the union of men and women must ultimately depend the continuance and character of the race, all that makes that union honourable and desirable, and that ensures its nature being determined by the inclination not merely of man's selfish but also of his social and moral nature, should be upheld and safeguarded. We all of us have it in us, even in the most

poignant moments of our life, to be either frivolous or in earnest, wayward and unstable or steadfast, ephemeral or wise. The weight of tradition and law should be in the balance of wisdom and continuity. But we must recognize at what moments their weight can tell. In so far as the rigidities of the law and the force of social standards act as a sobering reminder to those about to act, they are good. But rigidity and severity beyond a certain point may have no effect of this kind. Indeed in some cases of, humanly speaking, unavoidable mistake, they can have no such effect, and must in tying individual people down to their mistakes act contrary to public good.

We recognize this principle in regard to other social mistakes and crimes. We sometimes blind our eyes to its application in the sphere of marriage, partly because we think to make up for our extreme laxity of judgment in regard to the responsibilities of men and women in entering into the married state by an extreme severity towards the disturbing social failures that result; and partly because in our anxiety to make sure that this primitive, universal and potent human impulse shall in some sense conform to the civilized and the ideal we tend hastily to name all unions over which a rite has been performed as being of God. Yet when it happens that the very ignorant are moved by a superstitious impulse to bring a child to baptism, there lies behind their action a certain rudimentary sense of awe that has in it more promise than it seems possible to find in the rite of marriage as sometimes enacted where regard for convention and for show swamps all question of belief. We do not sanctify ourselves but outrage something sacred if we use forms and rituals with no regard to the spirit that informs them or that has once informed them. If we call rites so used sacred we render ourselves incapable of dealing with facts. After all, problems

cannot be solved by thinking what we would like things to be and then putting a blind eye to the telescope when we deal with things as they are ; as though blindness in itself were the determining factor in Nelson's victory and his insight and grasp of facts insignificant accidents.

Law and social custom can help the more responsible and unselfish side of people by saying "if you can live decently together you must," and by saying "if you have lived together and have children the first charge upon your future energies must be the fitting education and maintenance of the children"; but in granting separation we recognize that the union that should be sacred if it is at all, may and does sometimes become a physical or moral impossibility, contrary to the dictates of humanity and decency, and the determination of further procedure cannot be the better or more spiritual for not facing the implications of that recognition. It is tempting to fall into the mistake of directing energy to the impossible task of realizing ideals by force, rather than to the possible task of helping to make everyday life such that ideals can seed and grow in it. For belief in ideals must prove barren divorced from trust in a human nature that obviously and disconcertingly refuses to conform to any rigidly worked-out code of ultimate right and wrong.

(4) *Birth-control.*

The question of birth-control is one which, whilst it does not affect all families, is certainly going to have a very great effect on family life and on national life for good or ill.

A belief in the humane sanity of some conscious regulation of the birth-rate is not new and regulation has been long practised. Toleration of prostitution, even, was in part due to the existence of this belief

amongst people who were incapable of expressing it in other ways. What is new is the widespread and public acknowledgment by religious and social bodies of various kinds of belief in conscious control; and this, and the public advocacy, by people of standing and for other than commercial ends, of the use of mechanical aids of birth-control, makes the question one that in some way or another we most of us come up against whether we will or no. It therefore seems to demand some consideration from us all, instead of being as it used to be a question that individuals faced when necessary and settled privately without their solution being at all obviously the concern of anyone but themselves.

Numbers of thoughtful and far-sighted people agree that it is right in regard to children to be conscious and capable where before we were content to be instinctive and helpless. That is the fundamental fact with which we start. The old ways of undisciplined union meant an unjustifiable tax on the woman's strength and a tragic fatalism in regard to the future of the family produced. Growing consciousness and knowledge make that old way incompatible now with our sense of the miracle of birth with its promise of renewal and of transfiguration of the self-contained and finite to the continuous life.

We can see that Christ's "Take no thought" was not the first nor the second commandment but a piece of advice to help those who were already following the commands of love to God and man.

At the same time many of the people who are most sincere in their desire to avoid unnecessary waste and suffering feel a certain uneasiness when they find the swing of the pendulum leading people to a determination to avoid any kind of uncertainty and risk in regard to family life. The will and foresight that so clearly

minister to what is divine in man when they are inspired by pity and by love, can take on a character almost impious when inspired by a demand for comfort and security, and the descent to the less good motive can be made by degrees alluringly imperceptible. We can only take a certain risk in life, and it is good not to waste our risk-taking on matters where a little common sense and restraint will serve the purpose better; but if we think by our ingenuity and cleverness to eliminate all risk and suffering, we shall be like Nietzsche's "Last Man": "Was ist Liebe? Was ist Schöpfung? Was ist Sehnsucht? Was ist Stern? So fragt der letzte Mensch und blinzelt." We begin to face differences and divergencies of opinion directly we begin to seek for any determination as to the degree of control, the means of control, the advisability of various forms of propaganda for control. It may be the time is not ripe for settled conclusions, but there are certain considerations to which meantime we must open our minds freely if we want ever to come in due time to a right judgment.

Appeals to make known, especially among the poor, the advisability of control and the possibilities of mechanical aids to control seem to issue partly from unselfish and partly from selfish considerations. A real concern for and indignation at the sufferings of women and children works side by side with fear that if the educated and well-to-do practise birth-control, their favoured and rare progeny may be swamped by the large progeny of the uneducated and the poverty-stricken. We are more likely to be led along a right path by our unselfish than by our selfish considerations, so it is well to be clear with ourselves as to what motives are uppermost in our minds. We should obviously help the women and children if we could educate both men and women to wider interests and more self-control

and if we could ensure to every individual the possibility of decent conditions of work and housing. This is a bigger and slower task than teaching women the use of preventives to child-bearing; and children who are not born cannot suffer. Yet there is something to be said for enduring for the moment that we may inherit a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We may be tempted to look upon ourselves as saviours if we fit up noisome cellars with electric light and a gas-cooker, but are we really accomplishing much? Are we doing much for a woman who lives in shameful surroundings and physical bondage in offering to her and the man she lives with only absence of children? Again, sacred as is the duty imposed on us to safeguard the child and to bring home responsibility for the children born to the state, yet it is getting away from the truth to forget in our anxiety for the child that the good life depends on the character and condition of parents as well of children, that children play an irreplaceable part in the education and redemption of their elders, and that it may be a swift but cannot be a sound and permanent advance that is made by concentrating on the state of the children considered in isolation and not in their proper relation to the family and to society.

If we said in our haste every child brought into the world shall be done by (to coin an expression for our purpose) on a three-room standard, but a large number of adults must be content with a one-room standard, therefore a large number of adults shall be taught to have no children at all, we may not be speaking humanely after all; for the world which the children who are allowed to be born will inherit may prove to be a place where poverty has been kept from the door by love flying out of the window; where large numbers of men and women have never experienced one of the

most sacred influences that can come to any human being on God's earth. I suppose there is no one who has not at some time or another come across signs of the humanizing influence of a tiny child where extreme poverty has tended to dehumanize and deaden. And often a child is the one link between the less and the more fortunate, the one living bond between them.

Let us at any rate be as clear as we can as to how much or how little we are doing on these lines, and avoid falling into the error of thinking or talking as if we could set right a complicated condition of wrongs by treating one symptom only. I remember reading in the course of an article by Dr. H. C. Cameron of a boy who was visiting four different departments of a hospital and being given in one drops for his ears, in another ointment for his skin, in a third lotion for his eyes, and in a fourth splints for his legs, when all the time his state was not one that could be remedied by local treatment but was due to faults of hygiene and diet, a fact which could only be discerned by study of the child as a whole. And in this there is a moral for us when we concentrate on one isolated factor in life without knowledge of people's lives as a whole.

As regards the more selfish consideration, the fear of being swamped by undesirables, it is well to remember that improvement of conditions means a higher standard of living and brings into play moral restraints that can scarcely exist below a certain level. This fact was recognized by Malthus, though some of his followers forget it. Shelley looked on it as "a symptom of the revival of public hope that Mr. Malthus has assigned in the later editions of his work an indefinite dimension to moral restraint over the principle of population. This concession answers all the impressions from his doctrine unfavourable to human improvement."

The early nineteenth century thought that they had learnt from Malthus that higher wages could only result in increased population, which would in turn lead back to a lowering of wages ; but what actually happened was that as real wages increased, and more and more of the population rose above the level of extreme and desperate poverty, the birth-rate went down as it had not done under conditions which made any kind of restraint or forethought impossible.

Reliance on the bettering of conditions, the growth of moral restraint and the healthy agencies of a sound society will surely allay our fears in a more reputable way than reliance on the negative way of prevention which leaves people in misery. And when we are judging the general advocacy of the use of mechanical preventives we must remember that we know as yet far too little of the physical and spiritual reaction of men and women to their use, and have been far too much taken up with their one obvious negative result to be capable of forming a final judgment.

Considering this uncertainty and the inhuman conditions under which many have to live and the ill-balanced strains of modern life, I do not myself see how anyone can presume unconditionally to condemn either the users of mechanical devices or the advocates of their use, but I am myself prepared to condemn all advocacy of mechanical means of birth-control that assumes any finality or ideality in such methods, since at best they are clumsy and wasteful and at worst bestial. I also condemn the assumption, whenever it appears in the advocacy of birth-control, that it is the woman only who is to be instructed and who is to bear the responsibility and burden of birth-control, since on the mechanical lines suggested the man could, if he would, practise prevention as effectively and with less danger.

I think it is instructive in this connection to recall past history and remember the pitfalls into which well-meaning members of society fell when they pleaded for prostitution as a safeguard to society. They tended to ignore the power of education, social and spiritual, to accept conditions for others they would not have been ready to accept for themselves, and to demand the sacrifice of women, not of men.

Movements are often better judged by the general spirit that inspires them than by the advantages or disadvantages of the practical proposals they advocate. Let anyone who is disposed unquestioningly to accept the modern advocacy of the mechanical means of birth-control reflect upon the contrasting spirit of the following passages :

The one purpose of this Centre is to obviate human misery by preventing the conception of unwanted children. . . . Many married couples among the poor have only one room to live in, and under such conditions even one child is a doubtful blessing. The only effective way of dealing with this human problem is to teach all married woman, and especially the poorest, how they can limit their families without denying to themselves and to their husbands that physical union which is the basis of married life.¹

The lust of sexual intercourse, which arises from mere external form, and absolutely all love which recognizes any other cause than the freedom of the mind, easily passes into hatred. . . . With regard to marriage, it is plain that it is in accordance with reason, if the desire of connection is engendered not merely by external form, but by a love of begetting children and wisely educating them ; and if, in addition, the love both of the husband and wife has for its cause not external form merely, but chiefly liberty of mind.²

In conclusion, if what has been said of the family in

¹ 1924. Annual report of a Woman's Welfare Centre, run in connection with a society for the provision of birth-control clinics.

² Spinoza, *Ethics*, 4th part, Appendix xix, xx.

these pages has truth in it, if the family is the most really effective centre of social life and of Christian life, then the main purpose of our legislation ought to be to conserve in every way that we can the conditions needful to a good family life. The truest social progress will come from within the family itself. There are many things in our modern industrial system which we know to be directly inimical to family life. If the purpose of the State is, as Dr. Bosanquet used to say, to remove hindrances to the good life, must it not set itself above all things to remove hindrances to the decent life of the family? Some hindrances are so well known and obvious that only real good will is called for for them to be remedied. I will touch upon only one example, one that is in all our minds. Housing, not only in our great cities but in parts of the countryside, is such that it condemns many to a life that is almost invariably diseased and degraded below a human level. In one of our great cities 40,000 families live in one room, 118,000 families live in one room and a kitchen, and 12,000 condemned dwellings are still occupied. Think of the meaning given to these figures when we read that figures for 1909-12 in that same city give the death-rate per thousand for men and for boy babies as follows :

	Men.	Babies.
4-room dwellings. . .	12·89	102·57
2-room dwellings. . .	17·07	163·88
1-room dwellings. . .	27·89	210·25

The figures speak for themselves and make us feel that no good citizen can grudge rates that go to improved housing any more than they should grudge rates that go to improved education.

A writer in the *Manchester Guardian* commenting on another housing report, quotes Principal George

Adam Smith as asking : " Are not some amount of freedom and some amount of health indispensable to a revival of religion ? " and " Is it not part of the secret of the failure of Christianity to enlist large portions of our population that the basis of their life is so sordid and insecure ? " and goes on : " We have talked about the sanctity of the home, and the high unalterable law of Christian chastity ; but when we think, as this compels us to think, of families where the whole cycle of life for four or five persons—sleeping, eating, cooking, laundry, child-bearing, sickness and death—goes on within the four walls of a single room, what an idle patter it sounds ! "

I have no wish to minimize all the difficulties and hardships that must be gone through before we can put into practice what reflection seems to point to as the right way in these matters, but anyone who has been blessed with a childhood in a happy family may well feel that much is worth attempting for the sake of helping others to the blessing of a good family life. And in families whose members hold in remembrance that the family is a clearly marked but not a self-contained unity, that it serves man's present needs and prepares him not only for his future but for a future beyond himself, for service as for enjoyment, even if the solution of specific problems is difficult and painful, yet the words will hold good that were spoken by the knight in *Phantastes* : " If not in the individual act yet in the end their life will content them."

CHAPTER X

ETHICS AND ECONOMICS

H. G. WOOD, M.A.

ON the first page of his *Principles of Economics*, Alfred Marshall wrote: "Man's character has been moulded by his everyday work and the material resources which he thereby procures, more than by any other influence, unless it be that of his religious ideals; and the two great forming agencies of the world's history have been the religious and the economic."

These two influences are parallel in that both have inspired great crimes and great acts of heroism, but they are often felt to be antagonistic. Christianity, at first sight at least, seems to be indifferent, if not hostile, to man's economic activities. Thrift, the most tedious of all the virtues, which found such a prominent place in the Puritan ethic, receives but scant encouragement in the Sermon on the Mount, even when we have corrected the mis-translation, "Take no thought for the morrow." The directions against swearing seem to be aimed not so much at the life of the law courts as at the practice in the market place. The loyal disciple would be cut off from all those forms of bargaining in which the Eastern delights. Exchange itself is often regarded as morally doubtful, and the proverb, "Exchange is no robbery," would not have come into existence if men did not feel that an exchange to be profitable at all must involve loss to one of the parties. To buy in

the cheapest market and to sell in the dearest seems to embody self-seeking shrewdness which is the exact reverse of Christian benevolence. The pre-occupation with wealth and the production of wealth which fills up so large a part of our lives is clearly condemned in the teaching of Jesus. Is it possible to moralize man's economic activities ?

It is, however, important not to exaggerate this antagonism between the religious and economic factors in history. Man lives—and indeed progresses—under the pressure of economic necessity. Nowhere can he live without labour ; he always has some needs which cannot be met by the goods which nature provides ready to his hand, and wherever his wants exceed his resources, and he has to labour to increase and develop these resources, he has to economize, for to economize means neither more nor less than considering how to make the best use of your resources and your labour power. The essential economic activities—trying to secure the largest return for a given output of effort, and trying to secure the largest satisfaction out of a given provision of goods—are neither immoral nor avoidable. To run a business for profit in the sense of working it so as to secure a surplus is the very *raison d'être* of business ; and though profits so-called under the existing system of industry may not be distributed to the best social advantage, and may be illusory in so far as any particular business or industry secures a profit to itself by passing on some of its real costs to society, yet the Archangel Gabriel himself if he engaged in industry could do no other than produce for profit. He would not, of course, make personal gain his primary object, but he would require the realization of profit as a test of the efficiency of his strictly economic activities. It is also clear that exchange in itself may benefit and should normally benefit both parties to the exchange, and this springs

from the fact that the value of goods necessarily varies with the varying intensity of the needs they satisfy. A great deal of the suspicion that there is something immoral in the very nature of exchange and business activity is closely connected with the idea that there must be a fixed fair value for everything; though the absurdity of it can at once be seen in the case of the legendary smallholder who always sold his eggs for a 1d. because he held 1d. to be the proper price for an egg! Though few act like this smallholder, many accept his faulty presupposition. Even the precept, "Buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest," would not appear incompatible with benevolence if it were always equivalent to satisfying your own wants from the resources of those who could most easily spare the goods you need, and delivering your own goods where the need for them was most urgent. We may be sure of this, that the essential activities of men in producing and exchanging goods are not necessarily out of harmony with ideals of brotherhood.

The effects of man's economic activities on his character are beneficial at least on some sides. To till the ground in the sweat of one's brow is indeed represented as a curse in the story of Genesis, but history leads us to regard work as a blessing, and that much-abused phrase "the dignity of labour" is endorsed by Christianity. The necessity of working for his living has forced upon man a certain discipline both of mind and body. He is compelled likewise to co-operate with nature, and in consequence he has had to study the working of natural laws. The pressure of his economic needs has opened the door of science and invention. Further, his economic activities have compelled man to co-operate, and to co-operate in ever-widening circles. With the forms co-operation has taken in the past man

has never been satisfied, but his character has been modified and developed by the very necessity of that co-operation, and to solve the moral problems of co-operation in industry at the present time is the primary condition of the future moral progress of mankind. So it would seem that his economic activity has encouraged in man the qualities of patience, industry and foresight, a co-operation with Nature that can only be furthered by closely observing her, and a co-operation with his fellows which requires likewise the development of qualities of sympathy and understanding—all of which belong to the moral ideal as set forth in Christianity. On the other hand the temptations that come with the economic processes, the development and entrenchment of forms of greed and oppression, the very difficulties in the way of whole-hearted co-operation, mean that the economic life of man presents those problems which his devotion to his religious ideals should help him to solve.

What, then, are the temptations and immoral tendencies present in our existing industrial system? Here we may begin with certain features of our industrial life which are not necessarily immoral *per se*, but which may easily prove immoral in tendency. There is first the part played by the motive of personal gain. Obviously no one engages in industry except in the hope of a return to himself; he wishes at least to earn his own keep, and he naturally desires to secure as large a return for his labour as he can, and if industry, as we have already suggested, is necessarily carried on for profit, it is natural that anyone engaged in it should hope for some share in that profit. It does not follow from this that the motives which impel men to participate in industry are necessarily and exclusively self-regarding. Even a man's desire to earn his own keep may be prompted by a self-respect that rests on a sense of

public duty, and he may labour to secure the largest return for his effort not so much to satisfy his own wants, as to meet the needs of others. It is utterly false to suggest that the economic activities of men are inspired by entirely selfish motives. At the same time it is clear that a narrow-minded selfish desire for personal gain very easily becomes predominant in the world of commerce and industry. It is also clear that it works disastrously, particularly in all the bargaining on which the distribution of the product of industry at present depends. From very early on the classical economists who assumed that the enlightened pursuit of self-interest on the part of the individual would promote the common good, recognized that there were certain qualifications and limitations to the principle. The most serious qualification after all is the fact that self-interest, if it is whole-heartedly and exclusively pursued, is seldom, if ever, enlightened.

Human motives are always mixed, and pure altruism is rarely attainable, but the first requirement of the good life is not so much the suppression of all self-regarding motives,—a suppression which may be neither possible nor desirable,—but the sincere recognition of the presence of such motives, and the resolve more and more to identify one's own good with the good of others, and so to let motives which can be described as altruistic find their rightful leading place in one's activities. It will follow from this that economic activities are not necessarily vitiated by the presence of self-regarding motives, but it cannot be denied that such motives tend to be too predominant in the industry and commerce of to-day. Moreover, we must recognize that the prevalence of such self-regarding motives is not due in the main to original sin, to a special bias towards rapacity or self-aggrandisement in the economically

successful. The fact is rather that the industrial order itself stresses competitive self-seeking motives and makes little appeal to those elements of public spirit which even the average school tries to inculcate in the young. The moral transition from school to business is bewildering. The old ideas of *esprit de corps* fostered in school tend to lie dormant and to yield place to the ideas of pushing one's way and fighting for one's own hand. Then come the opportunities which thrust money and power into the hands of individuals, and if they succumb to these temptations, it is not surprising and argues no special graspingness or self-seeking in them. The problem for society remains to be faced.

In the next place there are moral problems connected with the use of a money measure of value. These problems seem to many to be so serious that they advocate doing without money and returning to some form of barter; but if the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, money itself in some form or other is essential to the maintenance of the economic life of the world. At the same time the use of money involves us in many difficulties. There are the many problems of honesty associated with earning and spending. There are also the special temptations which come to Governments and to high financiers to juggle with the currency, a procedure which is often robbery thinly disguised. But money as a standard of value honestly used may still easily mislead us. It is at the best a rough approximation to a standard of value. Not only are there things which money cannot buy, but the things whose value is the same expressed in terms of money are not necessarily of the same worth when we bring to bear moral and æsthetic standards. Yet the tendency is for men to be content with the money measure, and to subordinate moral and æsthetic

standards to the gross valuation of things in terms of money. The *Forsyte Saga* contains a discriminating analysis of this tendency, both in its cruder and its more subtle forms. Success is measured in terms of money, though from the standpoint of the welfare of society a man who builds up a small business which offers to the public goods of first-class quality and honourable conditions of employment to those who produce them, and who in so doing makes but a moderate income, may be succeeding in a much more real sense than some millionaires. Money at the best is but a very rough guide to real values, and the temptation in the economic life is to lose sight of this fact.

Thirdly, we have the factor of competition. It is not necessary to argue that reliance on competition has gone too far. The Trust movement in industry is in itself sufficient indication of this. The pressure of competition leads, if not to an increasing waste of resources, at any rate to an increasing friction in industry, particularly between employers and employed. It prevents the clear consciousness of the essentially co-operative character of industry, and rivalry and antagonism between classes, between nations, between firms, between individuals, make men feel that all their daily work is carried on in a spirit that is un-Christian. That some element of emulation and some element of freedom of enterprise is both healthy and necessary to economic progress may be freely granted to the older economists, but that these can only be secured by giving to the competitive factor the supreme place that it holds in modern industry will not readily be conceded by anyone to-day. It must be possible to organize industry in a co-operative spirit without sacrificing that element of emulation that is the spur to improvement.

The exclusive pursuit of personal gain, the restless

effort to make profits without much regard to the question whether these profits spell social good or social misery, the blind following of a money standard with the accompanying disregard of the more abiding human values, the reliance on competition as the safeguard of efficiency and progress, and the consequent ruthlessness in the conduct of business and a weakening of the element of friendly co-operation—all these things contribute to the present moral dissatisfaction with industry and commerce. Yet none of these, except perhaps the last, brings before us the distinctive features and the distinctive problems of modern industry. Covetousness is an ancient and deep-seated idolatry, lucre has long been filthy, and even competition which has been so unrestrained during and since the industrial revolution has always been more or less operative in the struggle for existence and for wealth. The differentiating characteristics of modern industry, as Karl Marx first clearly saw, are largely determined by a technical development. The use, first of steam-power and then of electricity, the designing and adoption of ever more and more elaborate machinery for the production of wealth, have constituted the industrial revolution whose history is more or less familiar to all educated people, but whose full significance is hardly realized by the public even now.

We may note first the effects of machine-production and factory-organization on the character of men's work. We live in an age of the subdivision of labour. The individual worker no longer makes a complete article. He is confined to a few processes or a single process. This results in the monotony of repetition—work. There is little in such employment to stir the imagination or appeal to the real manhood of the worker. There is no abiding interest in such work, and it makes

no demand on the worker's higher powers. He is not called upon to use his judgment or to plan things out. His daily tasks employ but his meaner capacities. Moreover, the capitalist forms of production have rightly been described as the adoption of round-about processes which take time. This places a gulf between producers and consumers. All the personal interest which came from making an article directly for the needs and tastes of a particular customer disappears from the mass-production of the present day. For great numbers of workers, the character of their work has been indefinitely impoverished.

Again, as the Hammonds have pointed out, the factory system involved a new discipline. With all the evils of the old domestic industry, men were or felt themselves to be more their own masters. They might work longer hours, but they began when they thought best and knocked off at their own discretion. The factory system cannot be run except with a number of rules and regulations. Such discipline may not be an evil in itself, but there is a natural resentment against a discipline which is not self-imposed. Such a resentment inspires the description of the present system as "wage-slavery." The objection to some forms of scientific management has a similar significance. To carry out prescribed muscular movements makes a man feel that he is reduced to the level of a machine and is not his own master. It is the employer who imposes the conditions under which his employees shall work, and he is naturally called the "boss." The enclosure-movement placed the agricultural labourer in dependence on the farmer, the squire and the landlord, just as the industrial revolution compelled the factory-hand to submit the ordering of his working-life to another's will. The world of modern industry thus offers opportunities of great power and control over

other men's lives to the few, and limits the liberty and self-determination of the many. The Trade Union movement is the attempt on the part of the workers to regain control of their own lives, and Socialism is briefly the demand that if such control as exists in the factory is necessary, it shall be regulated and imposed by communal rather than by individual authority.

The growth of joint-stock enterprise has still further complicated the situation. In the private firm there frequently existed close personal relationships between employer and employed. This often meant real friendship, and at least there was personal recognition and individual contact. The modern company is apt to end all this. The old paternalism in industry may not have been ideal, yet it was not so soulless as the limited liability company usually is, and under it men did not feel themselves to be nothing but "hands" or "cogs in a machine" as they do now. With the spread of education, the dissatisfaction of the workers with this position is intensified. They are less and less inclined to be content with the existing wage-relation in industry. They are beginning to demand a change in status, a share in the control and ownership of industry. While within industry the scale and type of modern organization have tended to eliminate personal contacts between employers and employed, social bonds outside industry have also been weakened as a result of the same development. Arnold Toynbee perceived the growing gulf between the classes which the industrial revolution has produced. Even the fellowship of the Churches wages a doubtful warfare with this tendency, and deliberate effort only moderates its consequences and does not eradicate it. The haphazard growth of our great cities brings with it all sorts of evils, and not least this, that they become too large for the maintenance of an effective

civic spirit. The moral of Mr. Chesterton's *Napoleon of Notting Hill* is still true. Our huge aggregations of population in industrial cities render difficult the full expression of the virtues of the neighbour and the citizen.

The great disparities in wealth created by modern industry are another potent cause of unrest and make men dissatisfied morally with the present system. The mere existence of great inequalities in possessions is a disturbing element in present-day society. The spectacle of idle loose-living persons disposing of thousands of pounds on their follies, while a tenth of the population is still understood to be below the poverty line, causes a natural bitterness of feeling among the disinherited and the public-spirited. It is not manifestly true that all or most wealthy citizens are idle and vicious, but the doings of the less reputable rich get most space in the papers. But even where great wealth is used with wise moderation and a measure of public spirit, the right to such possessions is called in question. There are so many doubtful ways of acquiring riches. Great wealth is often obtained from monopoly, and a monopolist makes his money by taxing or squeezing the public. Then again the want of publicity in regard to the financial position of private firms and the methods of concealing profits sometimes employed in the accounting of limited liability companies create a good deal of suspicion and doubt as to the source of many incomes. Moreover the whole situation is complicated by the part which the exploitation of labour has played in the building up of modern industry with its big fortunes. The extreme Socialist theory indeed asserts that all those forms of income which can be described as rent, interest and profits must be regarded as so much filched from the legitimate reward of labour. From this standpoint modern industry is nothing but organized robbery

and exploitation. This theory exaggerates the actual injustice from which the workers have suffered since the rise of capitalism, but those who know the story of the Enclosure Movement or the abuses connected with the employment of women and children in factories and mines or the history of the fight for the ten-hour day, will know how ruthlessly labour was exploited in the course of the industrial revolution and how fortunes were coined out of the health and lives of the workers. Even with the development of Trade Unions and the establishment of Trade Boards, it is doubtful whether the improved bargaining power of labour secures for the workers all that they are justly entitled to receive under the existing system. Though the problem is not so simple as popular Socialist propaganda represents it as being, the fact of exploitation is undeniable and the measure of it very difficult to determine.

The memory of past wrongs and the consciousness of being defrauded in the present promote an atmosphere of mistrust which renders co-operation and understanding between employers and employed very difficult. The effective working of our industrial system is also hampered by the belief of the workers that any increase in efficiency and output goes to the benefit of the employing class and not to society at large, and often sooner or later works out disadvantageously to their own class either by creating unemployment or by reductions in rates of pay which neutralize any advantage that might have come to the worker through his increased effort. This belief underlies ca' canny practices and some Trade Union restrictions. In themselves this whole attitude of mind and the habit of going slow which it inspires, are bad both for society and the individual, but they cannot be altered by dwelling on the fallacy of the work-fund theory. Some guarantees against

exploitation and unemployment must be introduced to release unduly restricted energies, and probably an increasing number of men feel that they cannot put forth their best efforts in industry unless they can be assured that their work will contribute more to public advantage than to private gain.

It is quite obvious that the Christian is vitally concerned with the moral problems which modern industry presents. He may be individually innocent, in the sense of not having willed these evils, but he cannot evade responsibility for them. He cannot be indifferent to them, and whatever his relation to industry, whatever his part may be, he must be concerned to transform the present situation. He cannot but be distressed at the sickness of our acquisitive society, and he will find the disease in his own heart. He must be sensitive to the injustices associated with wage-contracts and with the handling of markets. He must be pledged to the campaign to end degrading poverty. He must share the workers' discontent with the present status of labour in industry, and must wish to strengthen the motive of public service in all our economic activities. Above all he must be pledged to seek for the solution of what is the most comprehensive and most serious of all our industrial difficulties—the constant friction arising from the jealousies, suspicions, misunderstandings and antagonisms which permeate the industrial world.

The tensions and stresses in industry are not unlike the tensions and stresses which prevailed in the Army during the war. The Army system of discipline was and is deliberately based on the maintenance of social barriers between officers and men. These barriers yielded often to the comradeship of the trenches, and in any case gentlemen of all ranks could pass them without imperilling discipline. Yet there was often

ill-feeling and misunderstanding between officers and men, such as exists between employers and employed. Many a sergeant-major was regarded with the same kind of feeling as is inspired by a bullying foreman. There were antagonisms between different arms of the service. The infantry, *l'arme de sacrifice*, as the French called it, would curse and envy the artillery, and both would loathe and despise those who were on the staff. The staff, they would sometimes think, did nothing or worse than nothing, while they themselves did all the work and bore the real burden. So the unskilled labourer, the sacrificial arm of industry, feels that other ranks get off lightly compared with himself, and labour in general tends to depreciate or deny the value of management and direction in industry. The wage-earner envies the security and the "cushy" jobs of those on the staff of industry. And in industry there is no such sense of a common danger and a common task as sufficed to weld together the Army in spite of all its internal stresses. In relation to this whole situation, the Christian has to advocate and put into practice a spirit of patience and good will, a spirit of forgiveness for past wrongs, and a spirit of inquiry. For our difficulties are always being aggravated by what Lord Acton called "the slovenly use of the big brush," and a desire for more exact and disciplined thought and knowledge is a prerequisite of any advance. But while it is easy to see the general direction in which we must strive, it is not so easy to lay down a particular programme.

On the basis of the present economic analysis of the industrial structure, it may safely be asserted that as far as possible all forms of income which are true economic rent, should belong to the public, and, while the economist holds that interest and profits are alike justifiable and necessary forms of income, from the

standpoint of society great inequalities in wealth are prejudicial to the common good and the existence of classes consisting of pure wage-earners on the one side and of people living on interest on the other, is really undesirable, not to say immoral. In some way or other this gulf between the wage-receiving and the interest-drawing classes has to be bridged. The most popular Socialist solution is to abolish the private ownership of capital—to wipe out the *entrepreneur* and the *rentier* classes as it exists at present. There is much to be said for the public ownership and control of many forms of capital, but it is not clear that the Christian is morally obliged to accept the Socialist position, and there are grave doubts as to whether the abolition of private property in capital is justifiable or even practicable. Manifestly it is not the only way to bridge the present gulf between the classes. It might be bridged not by abolishing but by extending the private ownership of capital, so that there was no wage-earner who was not normally a capitalist, and by giving effect to old Richard Baxter's position that no gentleman of leisure should be content without some regular employment in the service of the Commonwealth.

It is often contended that the only practical solution of the problem of class difference is the adoption of the principle of absolute economic equality. Levellers and communists have appeared from time to time in history and have claimed that their position is the only true interpretation of Christian brotherhood. The latest recruit is G. Bernard Shaw. It is, however, very doubtful whether this claim is justified. In the New Testament, as in Aristotle's *Politics*, the stress is laid on the reality of the unity of the spirit in spite of inequalities of status and of spiritual endowment. It may fairly be contended that St. Paul and other New Testa-

ment Christians were more indifferent to inequalities of status than we under modern conditions have any right to be ; but it still remains true that there is an endless variety of spiritual gifts. "Unity of spirit" did not mean any rigid absolute equality in character and service, and it would be difficult to deduce from the teaching about the unity of the spirit and the variety of ministry and gift the view that absolute economic equality was the *sine qua non* of the Christian ideal of society. It is also clear that the assertion of the principle of equality has often carried with it denial of the principles of liberty and fraternity, and has been inspired by a spirit of envy which has no place in the Christian outlook. The case for absolute equality in the division of the national wealth is very doubtfully Christian. Even the principle "from each according to his ability and to each according to his needs," which is much more nearly Christian, does not commit one to the "share and share alike" principle. On the other hand the present inequalities in the distribution of wealth are not compatible with the realization of the Christian ideal of society ; a society in which the few can indulge their whims while the many go short of necessities exhibits an intolerable lack of brotherhood, and the Christian cannot be at peace in it.

Christianity, then, does not commit us to any current programme. It does commit us to work for change in certain definite directions, but each particular proposal to realize these changes, while it has a claim on the attention of the Christian just because it is an attempt to move towards the goal he has in view, must yet be judged on its merits. The Christian is called to labour for a perfect redemption from the spirit of oppression, and no political programme will enable him to see to the end of his task.

CHAPTER XI

THE EVOLUTIONIST AND BIOLOGICAL VIEW OF LIFE

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SOMEWHAT rapidly a remarkable change has come over man's outlook on Nature and his in-look on himself. He has adopted, sometimes too hurriedly, an evolutionist view of Nature and a biological view of himself. These two views are not quite the same, as we shall see, but they are inseparable historically, for both came from the work of Darwin and Huxley and their biological contemporaries.

I.—THE EVOLUTIONIST OUTLOOK

For a time, among intellectual combatants only, but now much more generally, the world, with all that in it is, has come to be regarded as the outcome of long-sustained processes of becoming which are naturalistically *describable*, given certain premises. To say that they can be satisfactorily *interpreted* in naturalistic terms is a very different proposition, but many people are satisfied with description, for the time being at least. This evolutionist way of looking at things has justified itself scientifically, and it is applied to the genesis of stellar systems, to the emergence of successively higher types of plants and animals, the last culminating in man, and to the history of folk-ways and social institutions. It

is very plain that the genesis of our solar system, the organic evolution of birds, and the history of political institutions are instances of three very different modes of Becoming ; but they are popularly included in the elastic band of " Evolution," and the world is somewhat coercively unified. We are simply stating the fact that many people nowadays see everything as the outcome of a continuous natural process of " Becoming," which is called evolution. Everywhere the present is seen as the child of the past and the parent of the future.

II.—CONSEQUENCES OF THIS EVOLUTIONISM

If the earth arose as a knot on the arm of a spiral nebula ; if living organisms emerged upon the earth as the result of synthetic processes amongst inorganic material ; if all the galaxy of living creatures is derivable from relatively simple ancestors somewhat in the same way as all the domesticated pigeons are known to have come from the wild Rock Dove and all the cabbages from wild Kale ; if Mind emerged naturally and necessarily when the nervous system attained to a certain degree of complexity, as indeed we see recapitulated in human infancy ; if Man is a mutation from a generalized, vaguely known, Primate stock common to the Anthropoid Apes and the early tentative men ; and if all has happened in a continuous natural way—comparable in its continuity to the *development* of a Newton from an egg-cell, it is not difficult to understand that the old bottles will not serve for the new wine. It is not surprising that many have seen a Götterdämmerung and drifted into agnosticism or atheism. It is not surprising that many have lost belief in any purpose and promise in the great process of Becoming. Nature is seen to be autonomous—a self-steering

vessel. Man is indeed at the top of a stately genealogical tree, but he is the outcome of evolution, not a divine creation. He is solidary with the mammals, rather than a little lower than the angels. He is what he always was, of course, but it is impossible, at first, not to think of him as impoverished in dignity and diminished in uniqueness. He has also become less immortal.

III.—HOW FALSE SIMPLICITY MAY BE CORRECTED

The frame of mind that we have depicted is common, and when we consider the revolutionary character of evolutionary doctrine it is not surprising. "But did not Darwin eliminate God," a student asked us, "and what am I but the highest Mammal?"

There are, indeed, many considerations which counteract this false simplicity, but they are not always present to the mind of the disillusioned student. To say that something "evolved" does not do more than state the mode of its becoming. The doctrine of evolution is in the first instance a *modal* formulation of the way in which things came to be as they are. To work out the factors operative in the sublime process is a task only begun. There is no doubt as to the fact of evolution; there is great and necessary uncertainty in regard to the factors. Perhaps there are factors in organic evolution, not to speak of social evolution, which are still to be discovered. We know that Topsy grew, but *how* did she grow? It is only yesterday, so to speak, that the rôle of the endocrinal glands was discovered, and there are more discoveries to be made. We know that Birds evolved, but by what steps and factors did they emerge from more or less strictly earth-bound Reptiles? We cannot even tell how a Silver Wyandotte

arose from the wild Jungle Fowl. Here we are not arguing from our *ignorance* to any positive conclusion whatsoever, we are merely reminding our student that he must not be facile with his evolutionism. He must not think that he who runs may read the book of the world if only he says "Evolution" many times.

Very little is known in regard to the big lifts in Organic Evolution, the origin of the great branches on the genealogical tree of plants and animals, the reasons for the disappearance of masterpieces, the ceaseless origin of the new, or the scope of Nature's sifting. We are not even sure whether individually acquired characters can be transmitted to offspring. No doubt great progress is made every year; our present point is simply that it is out of the question to speak of ætiology as more than beginning. Moreover, in biology we work with data like "the irritability of protoplasm," "metabolism," "growth," "development," "organism," "the power of enregistering experience," "behaviour," and so on, which are still in need of analysis. The study of colloidal protoplasm has cleared up many obscurities, but the living organism is still an "irreducible." The same must be said of the organism's "mind," for by no word-jugglery can we conjure mind out of metabolism, or a purpose out of proteins. In spite of promiseful results, like Professor Baly's synthesis of carbon-compounds by the action of short-waved light on carbon-dioxide and water, the origin of living organisms upon the earth remains very obscure. In spite of the progressive discovery of gradations in the ascent of man—"tentative men" like Pithecanthropus and Eoanthropus—there is still great uncertainty in regard to human evolution. All beginnings are difficult, yet it is just the first step that counts—taxing our ingenuity. Even if the cosmogonist goes back to the

nebula, as well he may, he is beginning with a world, and what was before the nebula he does not know.

We are so ignorant that we can understand how an ardent evolutionist like Alfred Russell Wallace felt that the known factors were not big enough for the resultant, and was thus led to postulate special spiritual influxes at difficult crises, such as the origin of *living* organisms, the rise of *conscious* animals, the emergence of *rational* man. His empirical science seemed to him so inadequate before those miracles, that he felt constrained to ask for grants from a transcendental treasury. To most students of science, however, Wallace's appeal to special spiritual-influxes seems to involve a premature abandonment of the task of naturalistic description. And it was not very complimentary to the Creator, this idea of powers which required to be reinforced at critical junctures.

Thus the bubble of facile evolutionism soon bursts before scrutiny. And yet every competent biologist is a convinced evolutionist, and is actively hopeful that the details of the process of organic evolution will gradually become more intelligible. At present it is perhaps less describable than, say, the genesis of our solar system; but year after year we come nearer the solution of some ætiological problem. On some far-distant *n*th-centenary of Darwin, the proud biologist will say with Kant: "Giebt mir Materie, und ich will daraus eine Welt schaffen." Then it will only be left to account for the "Materie" and the "Ich"!

But apart from his readiness to be satisfied with very incomplete descriptions, our naïve student did not realize that there is a problem beyond science, the problem of the meaning of it all. Even a completed Darwinism would leave every thoughtful man *asking*, at least, after the significance of the sublime process which has

led to Man and his place in Nature. But science does not inquire into significance or purpose. Its questions are "What?" "Whence?" "How?" but it never asks "Why?" But the question "Why?" is not likely to be soon silenced.

IV.—ENRICHMENT GAINED BY THE EVOLUTIONIST OUTLOOK

The process of organic evolution, envisaged with clear eyes, is heartening and enriching. Science must remain cold, taking no account of values; its light is like that of luminescent animals, without any heat-rays. But scientific method is not the only pathway towards truth; and having made sure of our scientific facts, we must look at them as *men*. And what an invigorating spectacle we find in organic evolution!

What wealth of artistic resources—a long way over a quarter of a million different species of animals, each itself and no other. What a succession of achievements are suggested by the words body, brain, blood, eye, hand, each the journeywork of millions of years! What advances are suggested by "warm-blooded," "viviparous," "Hormones"! Defeats, retrogressions, degenerations, blind alleys, there have been, but on the whole, evolution is integrative. If it may not be called progress, then we must invent some other word. What victories of life over things, what conquests of every corner of earth and sea.

Every living creature is a bundle of fitnesses, and while we no longer see the traces of the "Great Artificer's" fingers, we are left staring at the broad fact that life has proved itself wondrously adaptable. "You see, I make things make themselves," said Mother Nature to the questioning child in Kingsley's immortal

Water Babies, who wondered at the folded hands, when he expected creative bustle ; and, whatever biological theory one entertains in regard to the origin and perfecting of adaptations, it is difficult to evade the impression that the Institution of the Order of Nature must have been, so to speak, very well thought out.

As age succeeded age there was an emergence of nobler and finer forms of life—finer flowers on the ascending branches of the *Arbor vitæ*. It is not an optimistic theory but a fact of observation that the historical advancement of animal life has meant an increase of feeling, perception and control—and these are the marks of “Mind.” In a way, the most humanly-important fact of Organic Evolution is the increasing dominance of the mental aspect, as age has succeeded age. Whether we are monists with Lloyd Morgan or dualists with MacDougall, the fact remains the same—there has been through the ages a progressive emancipation of “Mind,” a fact that is in itself a promise. For great evolutionary trends have their momentum.

V.—MAN AND ANIMATE NATURE

For great truths we pay heavy taxes, and the naïve student, representative of many who feel the unrest of lost anchorages, had not acquired his “Darwinism” for nothing. The truth gained was Man’s solidarity with Animate Nature ; the truth lost was Man’s unique dignity. There is no doubt, as far as we can see, that tentative men arose from a Primate stock common to them and to the Anthropoid Apes, which evolved on a line of their own—a line not without its splendour, as we should know if we met a Mountain Gorilla in the Congo Uplands ! But by successive advances—perhaps

what are now called "mutations"—tentative men or Hominids, like *Pithecanthropus* and *Eoanthropus*, were succeeded by Man, a new "emergence." And whatever theory anyone holds, man's uniqueness remains a fact, though the loyal evolutionist will, of course, maintain that the uniqueness of the long result of time must not be used as evidence of any *discontinuity*. No one has any hesitation as to the apartness of birds, though all the known facts point to the conclusion that they emerged from a Dinosaurian reptile stock. Mankind illustrates another of these creative emergences or new syntheses; "creative" in the sense that there is a distinctive quality of newness; "emergence" in the sense that water emerges from the union of hydrogen and oxygen gas, a novelty with amazing and (perhaps) unpredictable properties.

Thus to the student who has lost his moorings for the time we would venture to say: when you inquire into man's solidarity with mammals, inquire also into man's uniqueness in aspiration and in achievement. He brings the stars near ("Approximavit sidera" was Fraunhofer's epitaph); he can see the invisible, hear the soundless, and do all sorts of other wonderful things by mastering some stretches in the great gamut of electro-magnetic vibrations—of which visible light is *one* of the 62 octaves; he can weigh the universe in a balance and knock a fragment out of an atom; he can wring bread (or fertilizers at least) out of the thin air; he can tame the microbe and turn the wolf into a dog; and all this refers only to one side of man's life—as minister and interpreter of Nature. In his life of emotion and imagination and artistic creation, as well as in his intellect, how unique is man. The point is simply that whether we think of evolution (say with Lloyd Morgan) as a radically continuous process from

nebula to City, or as a more staccato advance, including inorganic genesis, organic evolution, and human progress, not clearly unified, we must read the story in the light of the chapter at present being written in our midst—the Ascent of Man. All the groaning and travailing—even in “the lowest parts of the earth”—must be seen in the light of its outcome, imperfect but illuminating.

No unprejudiced student can read the story of Hominids diverging from Anthropoids, and tentative men from Hominids, and *Homo sapiens* from other Homos, and then speak of it all as “a chapter of accidents” or of man’s appearance as “episodic.” That is not the impression that the facts give. Moreover the element of the fortuitous in Organic Evolution diminishes in importance as we know more about the process. There is apparently some fortuitousness in the throwing away of part of the duplicate-inheritance in the maturation of an egg-cell, when the first polar body goes off with half of the inheritance-vehicles or chromosomes; but, a variation or new departure that comes to stay must be congruent with what has been already established, and this excludes fortuity. The variations that are continually occurring in garden Snapdragons, which have been carefully studied by Professor Baur, can hardly be said to be more “accidental” than the series of carbon-compounds which the synthetic chemist evokes. Many of them are certainly more beautiful.

And, again, it is a fact of observation that many organisms take part in their own evolution, testing their novelties or idiosyncrasies in relation to the vital environment, which, in some cases, they actually select. They prove the worth or disadvantage of their variations, playing the “hands” which fall to them in the

shuffling at the beginning of each new life. There is, we have admitted, an element of the fortuitous in Organic Evolution, but it is by no means fortuitously that the organisms saying Shibboleth are discriminated from those that say Sibboleth. The sieve is often a system of inter-relations that has taken ages for its establishment. The idea that Organic Evolution is a "chapter of accidents" is a bogey.

But it is useful to be more positive. As Darwin forcibly insisted, the "struggle for existence" is a formula-phrase including all the efforts and endeavours that organisms make against environing difficulties and limitations. It certainly includes stern individual competition, but it as certainly includes all ways of securing the welfare of the offspring, and giving them a good send-off in life. The struggle includes the co-operative as well as the competitive answer-back. Well-lined nests have survival value as truly as sharp teeth, and the generosity of a mother's milk may secure success in the struggle for existence as truly as the strength of talons. Man needs to learn from both of the two main modes of the struggle for existence, and both have their great rewards, but it is interesting to notice that Nature gives the approval of survival to the loving as well as to the combative, to the self-subordinating as well as to the hustlers. It is a travesty to speak of Animate Nature as if it were wholly "red in tooth and claw with ravine," "a vast gladiatorial show," "a dismal cockpit."

The more we peer into Nature's tactics the more we discern a rewarding of animals that face the facts with alert brains, that have the beauty and ecstasy of positive healthfulness, and that are good parents, good lovers and good kin. In other words, there are great trends in Animate Nature that are, as it were, adumbrations

of man's search after the true, the beautiful, and the good.

To some biologists this thesis of ours seems nonsense or worse, but we are not dismayed. The more we study *Animate Nature*, admittedly not without its disharmonies, the more it seems to us a scientifically describable world that admits of religious interpretation. Personally, we see no reason, for instance, why the description of man's ascent that the anthropological experts are giving, which we of course accept, should be regarded as inconsistent with seeing man *religiously* as a child of God. But if there is an inconsistency, there must and should be *unrest*.

VI.—THE FALLACY OF BIOLOGISM

The difficulty many a student feels is in combining a biological view of human life with an appreciation of the height of man's calling. The tendency is not to a humdrum view, but to narrowed horizons. One is apt to lose the soul in the mind, the mind in the body, and the man in the mammal. Thus one hears much that is wise in regard to "the instincts of herd," yet this is, for man, a simplicist fallacy. The inborn social predisposition in man is not an instinct and every human society transcends a herd. But this is merely an illustration.

It is recognized by all that man is able to experiment with general ideas—"conceptual inference," whereas animals, so far as we know, do not get beyond the "perceptual inference" implied in intelligent behaviour. They may be intelligent: he is occasionally rational. Man, again, has language, expressing judgments, but animals do not seem to get beyond a few words. Man is conscious of his past history and guides his own

evolution in the light of ideals. Perhaps the most we can say of animals is that they share a little in their own evolution and have the springs of good conduct. Man can register the gains and wisdom of the past in a social heritage—a very important new departure; but this is only hinted at in the ant-hill and a few other cases where permanent products are continued from generation to generation. Thus man—the more of a man he is—is far apart from the beasts of the field, and his apartness is no more lessened by the fact of his proved Simian pedigree than Newton's genius is lessened to us when we read that he was "one of the miserablest infants ever seen." But it is not always easy to keep this in mind.

Even more, however, is the student troubled by the effect that modern biological and psycho-biological teaching must have on the dignity of man's personality. The pervasive and powerful influence of disturbances in the ductless or endocrinal glands is an upsetting fact, lending itself readily to exaggeration. The importance of the Primary and the Secondary Unconscious is undeniable and the old stately Personality of Man does not come satisfactorily out of it. Most crucial of all, there is lack of light and leading in regard to the relation of Mind and Body, if relation it be. Is there a musician, Anima, who plays on the Instrument of the body, more or less thirled to it, influenced by it as well as bending it to obedience? Or is there one organism with two aspects, inseparable like the convex and concave surfaces of a dome, bound together as metabolic and mental, neurosis and psychosis, indissoluble like matter and energy? The two aspects belong to one life, yet so that sometimes we catch more of the subjective aspect, and say body-MIND, and at other times more of the objective aspect, and say mind-BODY. Or is there an evolution—an

emergence—of a new synthesis, *a soul*, as gradual, as incomprehensible, as apparently unlikely as the emergence of mind in simple animals seems when we try to think back. There will always be unrest until we make further progress in regard to this question of questions. For on it hinges man's hope of immortality or immortality.

VII.—SCIENCE AND RELIGION

In spite of reverse criticism, we stand by the thesis of our "Science and Religion" lectures,¹ that there can be no *radical* conflict between good science and sound religion. For they differ in aims, methods and language. They are incommensurable, but it is the business of philosophy to see that each minds its own business, and that there is no contradiction in their expression. Science seeks to describe and formulate the ways of Nature in terms of the Lowest Common Denominators, for the time being, such as Charges of Electricity, Protoplasm, Mind. Religion seeks to interpret the whole and our experience of it in terms of the Greatest Common Measure: God. Conflict arises when there is trespass, when science insists consciously or unconsciously in being interpretative (e.g. the theory of man as a behaviourist machine), or when religion insists on being descriptive (e.g. in fixing the date of man's creation, sometimes even the hour).

We must see to it that we do not look in a prejudiced way at any facts of science because they seem to us to endanger some conviction that we hold very dear. On that line there is impiety; and yet we must be philo-

¹ "Science and Religion." Morse Lectures, 1924, at Union Theological Seminary, New York. Methuen & Co., London, 1925; Scribners', New York, 1925.

sophically critical, for the formulation of a scientific conclusion is a very difficult art.

From the scientific side, on the other hand, we must not dogmatize in regard to religious interpretations that stand the test of time. Science is a very partial and abstract kind of knowledge, reached by fishing with a net specially constructed to let all but certain kinds of fractions of reality slip through its meshes. There are other pathways to reality, we think, besides scientific method; and one of these is the straight and narrow way of religion, which leads many to an expanding vision that seems to be no mirage. There is a fine touch in Bridges's phrase, "the necessity of poetry"; and there are many who would say the same of the Religious Vision.

CHAPTER XII

PEACE IN THE WILL OF GOD

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PEACE, a hunger for which is implied in the "unrest" to the discussion of which this book is devoted, is, so Dante tells us, the greatest of all earthly goods, and is to be found, according to the same poet, in the Will of God. Perhaps men have rarely been less willing than at the present time to take for granted that in submission to God's Will they will find a cure for their unrest; although it has never been easy to persuade them to seek it there, even when they were not prepared to deny the wisdom of doing so. But to the present generation the thought of a God enthroned in Heaven and ordering their lives according to his inscrutable good pleasure has become repellent, and to many incredible, while we do not so readily acquiesce as did our forefathers in the expectation of a future life beyond the grave, in which we shall find ourselves repaid for willing submission to that good pleasure when it entailed pain on ourselves by entrance on a state in which such submission will bring us nothing but satisfaction. This revolt against the imagery traditionally associated with religion is in part due to a heightened consciousness of its incongruity with the unimaginable vastness, alike in spatial extent and in temporal duration, of the universe revealed to us by the investigations of

modern science, and of its obvious indifference to our desires and aspirations. But the emphasis laid by democratic thinkers upon the half truth (as it seems to me to be) that all legitimate authority rests upon the will of those over whom it is exercised has also had its share in discrediting the consolations offered by religious faith. Like most of the ruling ideas of modern times, this doctrine can trace its descent from the teaching of Kant. But, while the thought of the obligatoriness intrinsic to the moral law was the principal element in Kant's own theory of the "good will," his successors have tended rather to dwell upon the "common good" to be recognized by each individual as his own, which the "good will" aims at realizing. It is not surprising that the attitude of awe and humility natural in the presence of a law claiming our allegiance independently of our individual interests and desires should seem to some out of place where we have to do only with a law regarded as, in the last resort, binding on each one of us as the expression of what he judges would be best for his individual self. The eclipse of faith in the persistence of this individual self beyond the narrow limits of the present earthly life powerfully reinforces the unsubmissive temper thus encouraged. This, we are apt to say, is after all the only life we have, and we must make the best of it. Some who speak thus have no doubt a very different conception of what is the best from that which St. Paul suggests (1 Cor. xv. 22) is entertained by men who deny the Christian hope; but some have not, and even those who have are often disposed to a kindly tolerance towards others who prefer to "eat and drink for to-morrow they die"—and with them we also, who find, it may be, our own pleasure in less simple satisfactions than they.

We should nevertheless be quite mistaken if we sup-

posed that the sense of obligation is dead in the hearts of a generation in which, bewitched as it is by a gospel of "self-expression," some of the older language about duty and responsibility awakens, it is true, no ready response. Men and women who question the sanctity of duties once regarded as of principal importance or the heinousness of sins which would formerly have blasted the reputations of those who committed them, will yet be found to regard *some* crimes—treachery to a comrade perhaps—as unpardonable; some requirements—it may be that of relieving an unloving spouse of the legal bond of marriage—as to be fulfilled by a decent man, even though it were to his own hindrance. Their code may be criticized, both as to what it includes and as to what it omits; but the principle of absolute obligation is admitted in fact, if not in theory. So again the man of science who believes himself emancipated from the superstition of an absolute ethic will yet usually, in his unwavering acknowledgment of the claim upon his allegiance of ascertained truth and his contempt for anything which he regards as a compromise with falsehood, bear his testimony to the principle of the "categorical imperative" as an inalienable possession of the human spirit.

It would be impossible in a short essay to repeat the arguments which have so often been urged against the supposition that our consciousness of moral obligation can be either reduced without remainder to a calculation of the individual's prospects of pleasure or satisfactorily accounted for by "evolutionary" theories of its origin. To be content with considering it merely a "herd-instinct" in masquerade is to ignore an element in it (which we may call its *absoluteness*) which, even if ignored here, is presupposed in the very notion of *science* itself, of the knowledge of *truth*, and cannot be

eliminated thence without unsettling the very foundation on which all those "explanations" rest which are put forward as sufficient to disable our claims to apprehend "absolute" values. I must be content here to declare my own conviction that what I have called our consciousness of moral obligation is itself such an apprehension, and to pass on to the suggestion that in this consciousness we have an adequate basis for a religious view of life, though it is by no means necessary to deny that religion has roots elsewhere than in the moral consciousness. Even Kant, who, among the great philosophers, has insisted most upon its origin therein, placed the starry heavens by the side of the moral law "in its solemn majesty" as able to arouse in our souls the emotion of religious awe.

It is true that there is a sense in which, in order to recognize the obligation of the moral law upon us, we must acknowledge it to be the expression of our own will. We cannot, properly speaking, *know*—as distinguished from merely taking our trust from others—that something is right and good for us to do, without in some sense *willing* it; so that, when we will to do what we know we ought not, we are inevitably conscious of a *division* in our will. What we will to do with a "bad conscience" we do not whole-heartedly will, just because "after the inner man" (to use St. Paul's phrase) we are consenting to the law that forbids it. Yet it is no less true that this law is not in such a sense the creature of our will that by willing otherwise than in accordance with it we can destroy its claim or can refuse, when it is put before us, to perform the act of will involved in its recognition—any more than, although we can only know for ourselves the truths of the multiplication table by counting, we can count otherwise than according to that table.

The moral law thus being presented to us in our experience of obligation as the expression of a will which we recognize as in one sense our own—since we cannot repudiate it as foreign and alien to us—and yet which is not necessarily ours here and now, is not unnaturally described as *God's Will*. For we mean by God a Being at once one with us and other than us; distinguished from us as the object of our reverence or worship, yet in which our own being is rooted, “closer than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet”; whose presence with us is less an actual possession to be enjoyed than an ideal to be sought and attained, yet which can be sought, as Pascal has said, only because it is in some sense already found.

It may indeed be asked whether there is any necessity to regard this will which is ours ideally, though it may not be ours actually, as the will of any person other than ourselves. When Martineau, for instance, says: “In the act of Conscience we are immediately introduced to a Higher than ourselves that gives us what we feel,” may we not agree with him in admitting the objective reality of the obligation without involving ourselves in the puzzles implicit in the imagination of a “moral Governor of the universe”? This is not the place to discuss this question in detail. I would only suggest that “law,” except as the expression of a personal will, seems to be an abstraction, and that, if we are careful to keep our conception of God pure from fancies which, as Matthew Arnold put it, make him “too much a man,” we shall find that it is entirely correspondent to our moral experience to regard the moral law as the expression of a *divine* will which is at once one with and other than ours; as we conceive God to be other than we, and yet ourselves “to live and move and have our being” in him.

If, however, we regard the essential feature of our moral experience in this way as being just the sense of absolute obligation, which we may recognize as identical amid great diversity of opinion as to the kinds of conduct regarded as obligatory, are we not involved in the difficulty (familiar to students of Kant) that we are bound to will what is good in general, but not bound to will anything in particular? Before dealing directly with this question, I should like here to call attention to the circumstance that in the experience of religious conversion the newly converted man often feels himself called to surrender himself to the Will of God as such, whatever it may turn out to be, rather than to the details of any particular programme for their own sake. We may, I think, find that this experience throws light upon our present problem. The newly converted man has, no doubt, on the one hand, *some* notion of the direction in which he expects the fulfilment of God's Will to lie. For example, he expects it to lie in a life of service to others rather than in a life of self-indulgence. On the other hand, he does not conceive the single principle, which is to determine the choices of every day, to be any precept or rule, but rather the mind of God envisaged after the analogy of a human character. Now (setting aside the risks of accident or disease, which are *ex hypothesi* excluded in the case of God) we commit ourselves to the wisdom and discretion of a person whose character we know and trust with far more confidence and less fear of untoward issues than to any abstract proposition, whose *litera scripta* would abide when the spirit and meaning had fled.

The religious man then sees in our inexpugnable consciousness of moral obligation the expression of a personal will, to which we are by its revelation of itself to us placed in a personal relation. Thus are reconciled

for him the need of an objective authority, whereupon we may, as it were, cast ourselves and in which we can rest, and the need of freedom to meet the ever-changing situations unfolded before us by our experience as it advances into the future. We need the former to appease our unrest, the latter to enable us to express ourselves to the full.

But to fulfil the function here assigned to it, we must attribute to the divine will a positive character; and such character would be inconsistent with the freedom it is desired to leave, if it were defined by any arbitrary principle which would impose itself only in virtue of some external guarantee. Hence the advantages of the religious temper seem to be fully secured only where, as in the Christian religion, the conception of God as love, and his law as the commandment of love to God and to our neighbour, are so little arbitrary that we are unable to conceive a higher or more comprehensive ethical principle to be possible.

Not many years ago this latter statement would probably have met with a more general acquiescence than to-day. The critics of Christianity would rather have disputed the faithfulness of the teaching of the Christian churches to the great principles above mentioned than the validity of the principles themselves. Many or most of them would even have endorsed the general ethical tradition of Christendom, while denying the obligation to believe in the metaphysical and historical dogmas of the Church, and probably modifying the tradition itself by the elimination of some of its more ascetic features. But we now hear talk of a revolution which shall get rid of "bourgeois morality" altogether and "make all things new" in a sense not contemplated by the seer in Patmos.

We need not perhaps take such expressions at their

face value. It is no doubt true that the moral code which is recognized at any particular time or place is conditioned by the circumstances of those who profess to observe it, and that it probably includes articles which only seem to be permanent features of the moral law because it is assumed that these circumstances will be permanent. Nor need we dispute the statement that the relative importance actually attached to various offences against the code depends to some extent upon the degree to which they affect the immediate interests of the class which is dominant at that place or time. But despite the removing of the things in our code which can be shaken, the things which cannot be shaken will remain. And I am convinced that among these last are included the two great commandments of love to God and to our neighbour.

It is no doubt true that those who would have us look upon the "class war" as the principal factor in the life of humanity, who pour scorn on efforts to promote good will between the belligerents therein, and who exhort the working class to an "ugly mood," would generally repudiate allegiance to the Christian name and therewith to the Gospel summary of the law. It is, however, well to recollect, lest we should be unjust to them, that Christians who would have professed that allegiance have often notwithstanding fostered national and sectional hatreds; and that to profess good will toward the wronged is frequently far easier and less costly than to redress their wrongs. It is also to be borne in mind that justice is part of love's demand and that the Christian Gospel of love presupposes a law of righteousness in transcending which it does not, as St. Paul points out, make it of none effect, but rather establishes it. Moreover presumably, even for those who preach the "class war" as the supreme duty, this doctrine

is only, even in their own view (what some have supposed the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount intended to supply) an *Interimsethik* to serve till the revolutionary day of judgment, which shall annihilate all classes but one; and we may assume that even now good will is required by revolutionary ethics within the "proletariat" itself. For in no other way could its unity be maintained; since, as Plato long ago pointed out, even a gang of criminals can only hold together in virtue of the justice maintained within the gang. Lastly, the same reasoning as has extended the "area of common good" from one's tribe to all mankind will no more suffer us to content ourselves with owing duties only to members of our own class than it has suffered men in the past to count none their neighbours but members of their own nation. Thus, whatever apprehensions we may have of the violence of the apostles of the new morality, we need have none of its capacity to take the place of the old in "the general heart of man."

The distinguishing and essential nature of Christian morality is not to be found in what some nowadays would call its "taboos," but in its law of love to God and man. It is only as carrying out this law that negative rules of conduct have their place in its system. Thus, for example, the justification of the principles of sexual conduct associated with Christianity lies not in their prescription of certain forms of continence or abstinence as such, but in their proved power of expressing the love of one's neighbour "as oneself," and of preventing infringements of that love. It is because lust is selfish and cruel, because purity is linked with the mutual self-respect which, in Kantian language, "treats human nature in our own person or in any other's never as a means only but always as an end," that Christianity imposes on its adherents a code designed

to check the one and promote the other. Students of the history of Christian morals will note that development has taken place therein on these very lines, the Christian spirit coming to find it possible to express itself in spheres of action which in primitive times were thought to afford it no such opportunity. In respect of modern social conditions the principle of love to God and to man—implying the sense of responsibility for one's whole life and the self-sacrificing service of others—is still fundamental, although the conception of what is required by God or needed by man has in many respects greatly changed.

The question may here be raised whether the doctrine of the obligation of Love, which we have offered as fulfilling the double requirement of stability and capacity for free development which seems demanded of a teaching which is to appease our moral unrest, is not hampered in its mission by being weighted by its connection with dogmas of which it cannot be pretended that they make as profound and far-reaching an appeal. It is of course impossible to deal adequately with the problem thus raised within the limits of the present essay. I must content myself with a very few remarks.

From the point of view of this book, two features of historical Christianity seem of special importance, as bound up with its ethical position; namely the unique position assigned to its Founder and the universal and supra-national character of the society which he founded and which finds its bond of unity in the expression of his Spirit. As respects the former, we may say, without prejudice to the possibility of a revision of the terms of the traditional Christology that Christianity cannot come to terms with any such recognition of *alternatives* to Jesus Christ as is implied in certain plans for a universal religion comprehensive after the fashion in which,

within its own limits, Hinduism is comprehensive ; for this would imply an insecure hold on the absoluteness of its own moral principle. Whether, in the long run, the hold of the civilized world on this principle can be secure without placing Jesus Christ where Christian tradition has placed him, we need not now discuss.

As regards the second point which I have mentioned as characteristic of Christianity, that too can only be very briefly touched upon here.

Islam alone can be considered as a rival to Christianity in offering to all men membership in a potentially universal religious society with an actual historical existence ; and it will be generally allowed among those who are likely to read this book that the Mohammedan community is less fitted than the Christian, both by tradition and by achievement, to serve as the spiritual home of humanity. Disappointment at the failure of that part of the Christian Church which has been most successful in maintaining an effective international organization to prevent the widespread disaster to civilization wrought by national ambitions and antagonisms during the Great War drove back one who had been among the most distinguished of Christian scholars, M. Loisy, on a religion of patriotism ; and the theories of the Russian revolutionaries do but aim at substituting " class war " for war between nations. The offer to humanity of a universal society wherein " is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free," is still practically made by Christianity alone, and, despite the actual divisions of Christendom, the world-wide efforts at reunion now in progress, however far they may be from realization, testify to the vitality of an ideal shared by all the divergent bodies which profess the Christian name.*

The conclusions which I would draw from these considerations are as follows. The only possible cure for our unrest is to be found in the recovery of a religious attitude towards life ; for such an attitude alone will combine the sense of responsibility with openness of mind. These it can combine because it acknowledges itself to be in presence of a Will having the absolute character implied in our inexpugnable consciousness of moral obligation and also the living freedom which we associate with personality ; which we can at once distinguish from our own several wills and recognize as that in which they are rooted and in union with which alone they can attain to full self-expression.

Further, the conception of such a Will is only given a definite content, which will not be in danger of being judged arbitrary and incomplete, by the Christian law of love to God and man.

Lastly, the only secure guarantee that history offers us for the continued hold of humanity upon this law lies in the acknowledgment, firstly of the spiritual supremacy of Jesus Christ, and secondly of the ideal of a universal society resting on an actual historical foundation of which his teaching and example is the cornerstone, an ideal which, inadequately presented as it is in the present divided condition of Christendom, yet forms an essential article of the Christian faith.

EPILOGUE

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I HAVE been asked to write an Epilogue to this book. As has been made clear in the Introduction, the book itself, though not a "Copec book" in the sense in which the twelve Reports presented at the Birmingham Conference of 1924 are "Copec books," it is a product of the Copec movement. The subject which it handles was prominently before the people who planned that Conference; the group which has written it was called into existence by the Committee which is charged with the work of following up that Conference.

In all discussions of practical ethics inquirers are confronted with the problem set by the conflict of loyalties. There is the obvious conflict between the claims of self-culture and of social service, to the solution of which Christianity makes a fundamental contribution in its doctrine that self-sacrifice for a good cause, or for love's sake, is actually self-realization in the truest sense. But there are also conflicts which are different from this, though they are often mistakenly stated in these terms; such is the conflict in which an artist finds himself, who can only obtain proper support for his wife and children by playing false to his own inspiration and æsthetic conscience. The ordinary philistine is sure to regard that conscience as a personal whim and his obedience to it as a piece of obstinate selfishness. But, of course, it is not so. Beauty is one

of the ultimate values and lays upon its votaries an unconditional obligation.

Now there is plainly no way of solving the particular problems of individual conduct in general terms. The attempt to do this was the vice of that kind of casuistry which the moral sense of mankind has justly repudiated. The general rules of moral conduct are indeed general and not in the proper sense universal; and we derive guidance with regard to the modifications of them from consideration of the grounds on which they rest and the purposes which they serve. But the actual decision in a given case of difficulty can only be securely made by the spontaneous reaction of a morally trained character to the actual situation; when people ask for detailed regulations, based on general principles, to govern particular cases, they are asking for what they cannot have; the subject-matter under inquiry forbids such treatment of it.

So we seem to be driven to the chaos of a sheer individualism, mitigated only by the constancy of the general principles on which different individual characters must be trained if it is to be said that they are morally trained. And it is certainly true that problems apparently identical in their constituent factors will be solved by different good people in quite different ways. Does this mean that in the most difficult instances of moral choice we have no escape from the admission that the decision is and must remain capricious?

Here again religion has a quite fundamental contribution to offer; it is the principle of vocation. This will not of itself solve any particular conundrum, any more than the principle "die to live" will solve any particular difficulty about social service *versus* self-culture; but it does indicate the direction in which the perplexed conscience may look for the clue to its

problem. For it takes all sorts to make the world, and each has his own part of the divine plan to carry out. It is not the same as everybody else's part; indeed it is not quite the same as anybody else's part. What matters for each individual, and for all, is that he should discover and follow the way marked out by God for him. There will still be difficulty very often in determining what God's vocation or calling is; but as soon as the question is put in that way we are delivered from the dilemma that we must either find rules that are the same for everybody or else resign ourselves to the moral chaos of individual caprice. Also the onlooker is delivered from the temptation to pass censure on a man who solves his problem in a way in which the onlooker would not have solved it.

It would be out of place to discuss in an epilogue to this book how men may find their true vocations; but it must be stated that the ways of finding them are as various as the vocations themselves. Sometimes in concentrated prayer a conviction arises sharp and clear, which seems to the man concerned to be God's answer to his prayer. Sometimes circumstances point the way with so definite a pressure that the believer in Providence traces in them the channel of the divine call. Sometimes inclination itself is the medium, for though it would certainly be monstrous to suggest in any way that what we happen to like is sure to be God's Will for us, yet it has to be remembered that on the whole we do well what we like, and like it because we can do it well, so that inclination does truly give guidance as regards the function for which we are fitted. But various as the ways are by which a man becomes aware of his particular vocation, two general conditions for his finding of it may safely be laid down: reality in prayer and a strong sense of duty.

No doubt in the world as it is there is an appearance of insincerity in this appeal to vocation ; and indeed it is one of the worst features of our civilization that it so nearly fetters most citizens to some one kind of occupation, without providing any reality of choice. This is part of the derogation from fully personal existence incident to poverty in the world as we know it. But even so two considerations deserve attention. The first is that religious people do, in fact, to a surprising extent find their vocation in the one occupation possible for them, because they accept it as God's will for them, and so accepting it regard it as their sphere for serving God and man ; and any occupation so regarded becomes also a field for self-expression. The second is that when the acceptance of the only career which circumstances permit involves real frustration of personal expansion, there is added to the vocation to that career the vocation also to true self-sacrifice, whereby the work of redemption is carried forward.

But if the principle of vocation indicates the direction in which the perplexed conscience should look for enlightenment, though not for any ready-made solution of its problem, it is also the supreme principle of social harmony. Hardly anything would do more to take the bitterness out of life than a strong sense in all members of the community that they entered their trade or profession, and then practised it, as their main sphere for serving God and man. We desperately need to recover the sense of God's supremacy over all aspects of life, and of our daily calling (the word is used so glibly) as indeed the sphere in which he has called us to serve him. Part of the moral unrest of to-day is due to the lack of this sense ; for on the one hand that lack makes religion seem to belong to a department of life only, and that a not very obviously important department

(for, as Plato showed, to departmentalize what is essentially universal is inevitably to reduce it to futility; if its proper sphere is all things, no one thing of any consequence can be exclusively allotted to it); and on the other hand it leaves the parts of life regarded as secular without any of the highest impulses or sanctions. The conflict of loyalties and the moral unrest of to-day can, I believe, be changed to stability, harmony and peace chiefly by a revival of the sense of vocation.

APPENDIX

MODERN DETERMINISM IN ECONOMICS AND PSYCHOLOGY

A. D. LINDSAY, M.A., LL.D.

THIS book has been confined to a discussion of moral problems. Those who have contributed to it have felt that the fundamental cause of the moral unrest of our time comes from the moral difficulties with which the book has mainly dealt—from the whirl of the conflicting moral and social problems which are pressing upon modern societies—afflicted as they are in these days with a consciousness of the innumerable maladjustments and disharmonies of the whole world. But some notice must be taken of an intellectual difficulty. For though the temper of mind and practical outlook which determinism sometimes inspires would be laughed away by any healthy moral consciousness, though men can often go on being better than their creed, nevertheless creeds have in the end a power over men's actions, and evil creeds a benumbing power. When men are induced to believe that moral and social ideals are a mere meaningless reflection of inevitable and blind economic changes, or of equally inevitable and blind psychological forces, their healthy moral impulses may be benumbed and their moral force weakened.

The application to life, both to the life of society and to man's mind, of the methods and assumptions of

the physical sciences, great as have been the practical advantages in the wider powers it has given us over both social and individual disease, has had the curious result which has followed all the triumphs of the analytical sciences. Since the seventeenth century science has been increasing almost without limit man's powers over nature and at the same time convincing him that he is so much a part of nature that he has no powers over either it or himself. The new science of economics has given men a technique by means of which they can control men's relations in society with far more knowledge and intelligence than ever before, but its effect on men's minds was to convince men not of their social power but of their social helplessness. Psycho-analysis has had the same paradoxical result. Its rapid popularity and widespread acceptance is largely due to its great and undoubted technical success, but it has produced a theory of the mind's nature, which makes that technical success inexplicable.

Discussions on determinism and free will are not usually welcomed. Many regard the question as a mystery to which there is no key and feel that Milton was right when he assigned the discussion to the fallen angels who had eternity to argue in—

Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute—
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

But if, avoiding these wandering mazes, we consider rather the history of the problem and see how these deterministic theories arose, we may get a readier key to their solution. It is possible to rebut satisfactorily the theory of economic determinism or at least the rigid and fatalistic determinism sometimes implied in the theory; and the rebuttal will perhaps give us a clue to the psychological problem.

Men sometimes talk as though the belief in free will was old and the belief in determinism was the result of the discoveries of modern science. That is a misrepresentation of the facts. Free will has never been so emphatically asserted as in modern times, and the facts show that an extreme doctrine of free will seems to have some curiously intimate connection with an equally extreme doctrine of determinism. Descartes, the first great exponent of a mechanical theory of the world which became the basis of all later determinism, was also the exponent of a most unqualified doctrine of free will. This coincidence of extreme forms of liberty and belief in determinism shows itself in many spheres in the history of modern thought. Those forms of Protestantism which most emphatically proclaimed the liberty of the individual moral conscience and repudiated all forms of authority which had formerly bound it, were Calvinist. Those theories of political society which represented men as isolated, independent individuals, having each "a right to all things," easily produced a doctrine of state absolutism more rigid and uncompromising than had been known before. The doctrine of Economic Determinism, the belief in the iron laws of political economy from which there is no escape, was evolved by the individualists, the apostles of the doctrine of *laissez-faire*.

The explanation of this paradox is simple. If we represent men as in their nature independent of one another, owning no dependence and no authority but that which comes from their own independent nature, then the relations between them must be governed by forces alien and external to that nature. Determinism is the direct consequence of atomism. Nowhere is this seen so obviously as in the political theory of Hobbes. Just because he insists on men's complete natural inde-

pendence, he has to insist that the government must be entirely above and external to men's wills. Like Shigalov in Dostoievski's *The Possessed*, "starting from unlimited freedom he arrives at unlimited despotism." This startling progress is not perverse but inevitable.

The new sciences went the same way. For their method was analysis and their aim was to arrive by analysis at some elementary simple units. These units being the constituents of reality, the relations of the units were thought of as external to their nature, relations of composition and collocation, and therefore as entirely mechanical. There is no escape, as Kant pointed out in his critique of Judgment, from a thorough-going mechanism except in the fact of organism, of a whole which is not a mere collocation or group but somehow pervades and is pervaded by the nature of its parts.

In political theory the solution of this dilemma was discovered by Rousseau. He pointed out that the solution of his problem "How to find a form of association which defends and protects with all the common force the person and the goods of every associate and by which each uniting himself with all still obeys only himself and remains as free as before" was to be found in the fact that in a true society there is more than an external bond of union—a true society is one in which the members find their true nature in the purposes of the society. Freedom then is possible in society in so far as the social relations express and give scope to the nature of the members of the society. No society does that perfectly, but any true society does it to some extent.

What was essentially the same point was put by Kant when he made the difference between "heteronomy" and free will to consist, not in the will being determined

by outside forces or not determined at all, but in its being determined by accidental circumstances or by its own law. The free will is, according to him, the self-legislating will, and we act according to the law we prescribe for ourselves when we will as members of a society of what Kant calls a kingdom of ends. Experiments such as that of the George Junîor Republic show what remarkable results of discipline and freedom in union this principle can produce when properly applied.

The psychology of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, following the scientific presupposition of the time, tried to regard the mind as a collection of simple, independent, atomistic ideas and consequently to describe the operations of the mind as brought about by the collocation and composition of these atoms, by the blind operation of what it called the association of ideas. But it found itself unable to explain the simplest acts of thinking and willing unless it regarded the mind as more than a composition of such atoms, unless it recognized that the mind has a unity of its own and that that unity may in varying degrees pervade each separately discernible element of the mind. If we stop thinking we can become the victims of the association of ideas. The unity of the mind can more or less abdicate control, and when it does so, association assumes control instead.

In all these discussions we see the same principle involved. If you begin by thinking of individuals, things, ideas or any units as existing entirely by their own right, free and independent, then the relations between these can only be external. External relations are capable of being investigated and studied, and internal natures, being absolutely internal, cannot effect anything beyond themselves. The steps are easy that

lead to thinking of the external relations as completely determining both external relations and internal natures, and thus starting with complete indeterminism you will come to complete determinism. But the moment you begin to consider the nature either of individuals in a society or of thoughts and desires in an individual mind, you will see that these independent units are a myth, that the structure of society or the unity of the mind is not alien to the true nature of the units, that therefore neither society nor a mind are mere collections of units.

Economic determinism is only a striking instance of the general misconception on which all determinism is based ; but it is such a striking instance that it is worth considering for itself.

The belief in economic determinism was, as has been said, first formulated by the individualist economists, and it was forced on them by their actual experience. The period of the Industrial Revolution, the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, was a period of growing individualism. Individual enterprise and initiative flourished as they had never flourished before. Yet as the factory system developed, the people of England found that remarkable changes were coming over their country which no one had willed, which most people disliked and which the most benevolent individuals seemed powerless to stop. These changes were largely the result of the great mechanical inventions of the period. These inventions had been consciously willed, but their effects upon society seemed to be blind and unavoidable. Hence the very men who began with being certain that all would be well if individuals were freed from all restrictions on their actions and allowed free scope, changed from a complacent optimism to a pessimism as dis-

astrously complacent, and came to think of men as necessarily in the grip of iron economic laws over which they had no control.

This did not and could not consistently involve a complete theory of determinism. For the whole point of the experience which produced the theory was the contrast between men's unexpected powerlessness in face of a general situation which was the result of their unco-ordinated individual actions, and their obvious power to bring about particular results which they wanted, their power to make private profits by initiative and enterprise, for example. That individuals were powerless to alter the general situation, that what had happened to English society was bound to happen under these circumstances—all that is undoubted: but that does not in itself show that economic determinism is true as a general theory but only that there may be conditions of society which are deterministic. The theory of economic determinism arose when it did because collective helplessness is the natural nemesis of *laissez-faire*, as indeed collective helplessness is a natural result of the refusal to act collectively.

A simple illustration will perhaps make this clear. Plato says sarcastically of this type of State which makes anarchism its ideal, that the very "horses and asses have learnt a wonderfully free and glorious way of walking, and run into everyone they meet in the streets unless he gets out of their way." If there were no traffic regulations, if we all drove, thinking only to get on as fast as we could and regardless of others, the result in crowded streets would be inevitable—collisions and obstructions. And just because there was no common control, what happened would be determined by the density of the vehicles and the material circumstances, the narrowness of the streets and the blindness of the

corners. We could produce a science of traffic disasters and predict with fair accuracy the numbers of accidents at different corners. The careful driver might perhaps prolong his own immunity, but he could not alter the general situation. But men do not therefore invent a theory of traffic determinism and give up the problem in despair. However tardily they begin to alter roads and to regulate the action of the individuals by rules of the road prescribed in the common interest and by putting policemen at dangerous corners to regulate the traffic, the success of these measures depends upon men being ready to submit to such rules and to give way when occasion requires, in the common interest; and it requires knowledge and good sense in the policeman; but that traffic can be controlled and results avoided which in the absence of control are inevitable, is obvious to everyone.

The same is true in principle of economic relations. They are immensely more complicated than traffic: and their control needs more knowledge and more widespread good will than does traffic control. But we have already in the last fifty years learnt that economic conditions which men in the early nineteenth century thought inevitable, can be cured by collective action.

Something has been said already about psychological determinism. It will perhaps be enough to point out how the analogy of economic determinism applies to psycho-analysis. The method of psycho-analysis depends on a study of association. That is, it studies the mind when the controlling unity of the mind is in abeyance. If our minds were completely unified or, to use the prevalent word, integrated, there would be no need for or possibility of psycho-analysis. If our minds were not capable of increasing unity or integration, psycho-

analysis could not effect a cure. But just as the modern economist lays bare the blind results of economic actions which are harmful because they are not inspired by the purposes of society, in order that society may cure the evil of regulation in the light of these purposes, so the psycho-analyst lays bare the blind working of mental factors, in order that the patient, by becoming aware of these factors, and taking them into his consciousness, may integrate them, may control instead of being controlled by them.

The mind, whether of society or of the individual, can only act as it would, if it knows the facts on which it is to act. It has first got to study the facts as they are before the mind operates on them, but if the economist thinks that the isolated economic relations are society, or the psycho-analyst thinks that complexes revealed by the methods of association are the mind, it is only because they have become so absorbed in their analysis that they forget the synthesis for the sole sake of which that analysis exists.

The alternative to hypostatizing an unknown and unknowable outside force which tyrannizes us into order is a recognition of solidarity, of a kinship between men and between man and nature which, whilst it breaks down the illusion of absolute individuality, confirms us in a knowledge of participation in a reality greater than any independent human individuality could reach to.

It was this reality of kinship that inspired Wordsworth to conceive of the "love and holy passion" that should bless the union of the discerning intellect of man to this lordly universe, and that made him, looking at "nothing more than what we are," hail our powers of participation in creation.

I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
Would chant in lonely peace, the spousal verse
Of the great consummation : and by words
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain
To noble raptures ; while my voice proclaims
How exquisitely the individual Mind
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less
Of the whole species) to the external World
Is fitted :—and how exquisitely, too—
Theme this but little heard of among men—
The external World is fitted to the Mind ;
And the creation (by no lower name
Can it be called) which they with blended might
Accomplish.

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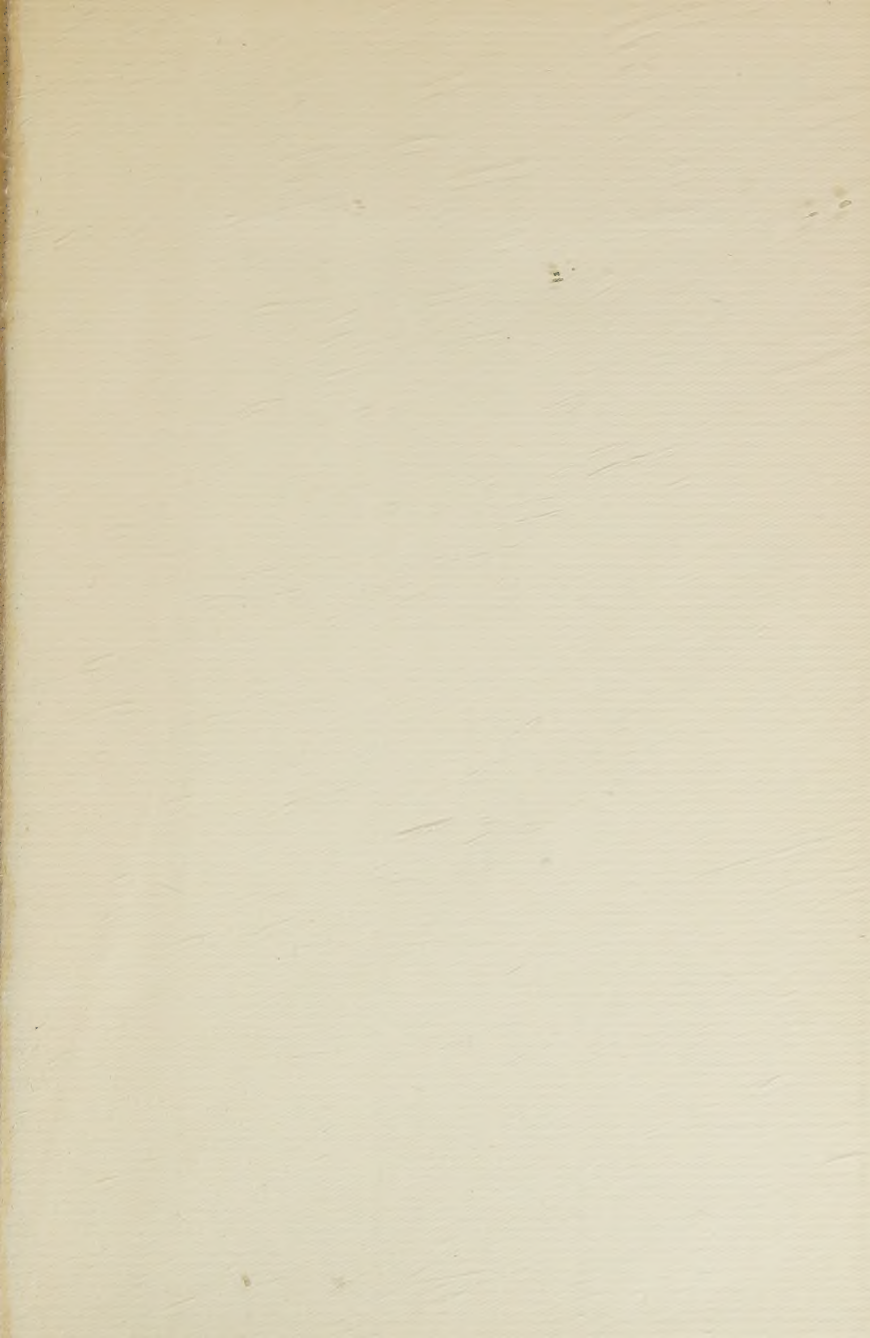
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